



Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond
November 27 – December 4, 2015

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Aboriginal Arts & Culture

Tanya Tagaq's music to be removed from controversial film, Inuk singer tweets

Filmmaker replaces throat singing with silence, ready to remake film as 'meditation on copyright'

By Jeanette Kelly, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 26, 2015 3:10 PM ET Last Updated: Nov 26, 2015 7:45 PM ET



Inuit throat singer Tanya Tagaq said on Twitter Thursday that Dominic Gagnon, the director of a mashup film called *Of the North*, is removing her voice track from the controversial film about modern day life in Northern Canada.

Tagaq said Wednesday she was prepared to sue Gagnon for using her voice track without her permission.

Gagnon's film screened last week at the Montreal International Documentary Festival (RIDM), raising the ire of several Inuit artists who called the film "racist."



Tanya Tagaq tweeted Thursday that *Of the North* director Dominic Gagnon, had agreed to remove her voice track, which she said had been used without her permission. (Ivan Otis)

Of the North is a 74-minute collage film made up of publicly available clips drawn from internet sites like YouTube. There are images of everyday life, such as people snowmobiling and hunting.

But there are also clips of Inuit appearing drunk, wrestling on the floor, crashing an ATV and vomiting. There's also one sexually explicit scene, of a half-naked young Inuk woman sitting on the knee of a clothed white man.

That content, as well as the fact that Gagnon has never actually visited the North, has angered many Inuit artists and others.

Tagaq — an Inuk from Cambridge Bay, Nunavut — took to Twitter Tuesday to say she was "disgusted" by the festival's decision to screen the experimental documentary.

Festival apologizes, seeks 'conversation'

The film festival issued a news release on Thursday, saying that it was paying attention to the criticism and taking it seriously.

"We do sincerely apologize that it hurts members of the public," said Mara Gourd-Mercado, the festival's executive director.

"We should have accompanied the film way better by having people from different Inuit communities, professors, ethnographers at the screenings to really have a conversation."



This screen shot of a young Inuk on a snowmobile is among the images found online and incorporated into Dominic Gagnon's controversial mashup film *Of the North*. (Dominic Gagnon)

Gourd-Mercado said the festival did not consider *Of the North* to be racist.

"It was programmed as a critical discourse on colonialism and its still devastating impacts, through a montage of images recorded and uploaded to YouTube by Inuit peoples," she said in the news release. "We believe that this film confronts stereotypes that have afflicted Inuit peoples."

Over the documentary festival's 18-year history, she said, it has presented films from all over the world and from a wide range of perspectives.

"Our mistake this time was not to accompany the film in the right way and not to do enough outreach to Inuit communities to make sure they would be present to have that conversation," Gourd-Mercado said.

Director defends his use of found footage

Of the North's director, Dominic Gagnon, began making films from found footage seven years ago, after losing the sight in his right eye and being unable to operate a camera any longer.

He describes his current work as "films about people who film themselves," and says the internet is a film archive.

"It's another way to make cinema. I'm a collage artist," he said.

' If there's only 74 minutes of black and silence, I think it would be a beautiful meditation on what is going on now with copyright.' —*Dominic Gagnon, director of 'of the North'*

Gagnon doesn't sell his films, and he said that's what allows him to do things others cannot do.

"It would be indecent to take those visuals and sell them and make money."

One of his documentaries, *Rip in Pieces America*, is a collage of webcam clips that have been censored from video sites such as YouTube.

So he sees nothing wrong in having put together a film based on found images put on the internet by people living in Canada's North, even though he hasn't visited the area himself.

"We live in the 21st century. I make films about people who film themselves, and the best way to find them is on the internet."

"For some people it's hard to understand how I work, but I have access to everything on the computer from here."

Gagnon does not think the images are racist. On the contrary, he said, they show a certain sense of social solidarity.

"Where people see a guy throwing up, I see a group of people trying to get out of [a bad situation], trying to see a different future than what they're in now," Gagnon said.

Gagnon thinks it's unlikely that many people who are being critical have seen the film.

"I think part of the problem is I'm not Inuk. But I've done films about Bulgarian street kids, about American survivalists, kids in orphanages in Vietnam. And no American came at me and said, 'America is not just about that.'"

Throat-singing replaced with silence

Gagnon said he'd like to meet with Tagaq, the throat singer, and explain himself.

For the time being, he's decided to replace the music he composed, inspired by one of her tracks, with silence.

"I'm willing to take out everything that is disturbing in the film," Gagnon said. "If there's a problem with an image, I will put black leader."

"And if there's only 74 minutes of black and silence, I think it would be a beautiful meditation on what is going on now with copyright — about representation and the life up North and the difficulty to represent what's going on there right now."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/tanya-tagag-ridm-in-the-north-1.3338637>

Royal Winnipeg Ballet releases *Going Home Star* CD

Posted on November 27, 2015 by [MyToba](#) in [ARTS](#), [dance](#), [Featured](#)

If you loved the music for the RWB's *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation*, you'll be happy to hear the original score is now available on CD and through iTunes.

Composer Christos Hatzis' ballet score pairs internationally renowned Inuit throat singer Tanya Tagaq with the haunting Cree songs of Steve Wood, the Northern Cree Singers, and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, led by Tadeusz Biernacki. Based on a story by Joseph Boyden, the ballet tells the story of the infamous Indian Residential Schools of Canada while speaking to the universal issues of cultural identity.

Hatzis's score contains elements of traditional ballet, swing-era jazz, disco dance music, dub-step and scratch DJ mixes.

"Mark (Godden) and I researched a great number of Aboriginal musicians as potential collaborators for our project," says Hatzis. "Tanya Tagaq and The Northern Cree Singers easily stood out, not only for their great artistry but also for their ability to address and transcend the cultural particular and speak to the universal."

Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation will soon tour Canada, including stops in Ottawa (January 28-30), Kingston (February 2), Burlington (February 43), Toronto (February 5-6), Brandon (March 21), Regina (March 22), Saskatoon (March 23), Banff (March 26), Kelowna (March 29-30), Victoria (April 1-2), Nanaimo (April 4-5) and Vancouver (April 7-9).

“The story behind *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation* takes us through heart-wrenching paths but also leaves us hopeful,” says André Lewis, RWB Artistic Director. “Christos has been able to create music that connects to the story and takes audiences to a contemplative and emotional journey.”

The original soundtrack is available online on iTunes and Amazon.

Direct Link: <http://mytoba.ca/arts/royal-winnipeg-ballet-releases-going-home-star-cd/>

Air Farce's Craig Lauzon often the only indigenous comic in the room



Craig Lauzon will box in the Fight to End Cancer. (Erica McMaster)

Craig Lauzon may be best-known for his impressions of political leaders, including former Toronto mayor Rob Ford and a hilarious but disturbingly accurate version of Stephen Harper in a send-up of *Gangnam Style*.



Air Farce member Craig Lauzon as Stephen Harper. ((CBC))

This Dec. 31, he'll play Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Lauzon is an Ojibway actor and comedian living in Toronto. He has been a regular on the popular CBC-TV comedy show *Air Farce* since 2004, and has appeared on several of their New Year's Eve specials.

"I know that with a lot of my friends, the more they tease you, the more they love you." - *Craig Lauzon describes First Nations humour*

"I love to make fun. It all depends on how you do it and the tone," he said. "The person you are usually doing it to knows if you're having fun or not."

Fight to push boundaries

Although Lauzon brings that sense of humour and wit to his personal projects, he has yet to make that crossover to the *Air Farce* specials, where he is the only indigenous person on the show.

"We are a satire show. It's sketch comedy; it's political. There's not really a group in this country outside of politicians that are more political than we are," said Lauzon, referring to the indigenous community.

He thinks shows such as *Air Farce* should have more fun with the indigenous point of view on current affairs.

"I think a lot of it [the resistance] is fear of backlash," Lauzon said. He cited the NFL's Washington football team name as one example that is ripe for satire.

"I feel like there is always a way to poke fun of and make light of a situation if you handle it the right way. I think that is what our job is supposed to be on this kind of a show."

Lauzon referenced John Oliver, Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert as other performers who take serious topics and shed light on them through the use of humour and satire.

Fight to end cancer

But Lauzon also has a serious side, he is currently training for a boxing match in June, as part of the [Fight to End Cancer](#), which raises funds for cancer research.



August Schellenberg inspired Craig Lauzon.

Lauzon was overcome with emotion when he spoke about his motivation for getting involved.

"In 2012, I got to work with one of my heroes, August Schellenberg," Lauzon said, his voice shaking.

At 75, Schellenberg, who appeared in *Grey's Anatomy*, *Dreamkeeper* and *Free Willy*, had finally realized his lifelong dream of bringing an all-star indigenous cast to perform Shakespeare's *King Lear* at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa.

Lauzon said Schellenberg, a Golden Gloves boxer in his youth, was still going to the gym every day while they performed *King Lear*.

Schellenberg had already battled a bout of cancer and performed the two-hour play, in which he faced some very physical demands, with just one lung.

Schellenberg died the following year after a recurrence of lung cancer.

Lauzon's has turned down work in order to take part in the Fight to End Cancer — and turning down work is no easy task for a Canadian actor. Neither will it be easy to climb into that ring on June 4 in Toronto.

"It's going to be for Auggie," Lauzon said quietly.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/exploring-the-past-present-and-future-of-life-in-indigenous-canada-1.3336594/air-farce-s-craig-lauzon-often-the-only-indigenous-comic-in-the-room-1.3338976>

Seven Oaks explores Cree, Ojibwa, Tagalog bilingual programs

Winnipeg school division to discuss plan at board meeting Monday night

By Laura Glowacki, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 30, 2015 12:34 PM CT Last Updated: Nov 30, 2015 12:34 PM CT



Seven Oaks School Division is exploring offering classes in Cree, Ojibwa or Tagalog. (CBC)

A plan to provide school instruction in Cree, Ojibwa and Tagalog in Seven Oaks School Division starting in fall 2016 will be discussed at a board meeting Monday evening, superintendent Brian O'Leary said.

The school board is in an exploratory stage and will gauge interest through a parent survey in the New Year, said O'Leary.

"I think the board will want to see what the response is from the community and look at it as part of their budget considerations," he said.

Half the school day would be taught in an indigenous language or Tagalog, with the structure modelled after the Ukrainian program already running at R. F. Morrison School, O'Leary said.

Seven Oaks is currently phasing out its Hebrew program, which offered similar schooling, because of demographic shifts, said O'Leary.

Just 40 students willing to sign up for one of the languages would be enough to start the program, he said.

"I think there's a feeling that [parents] would like to keep young people connected to the culture, and we need school programs that help the community to do that," said O'Leary.

Some Seven Oaks schools already provide after-school language instruction in Cree, Ojibwa and Tagalog, and O'Leary believes some of those teachers would be suitable for new bilingual programs.

"We have been able to attract language teachers for that, and we're confident that if there's sufficient interest to warrant it, we could offer a quality program." he said.

Seven Oaks School Division will decide whether to offer the new bilingual programs on March 15, when it passes its final budget.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/seven-oaks-bilingual-programs-winnipeg-1.3343738>

Aglukark brings Christmas album tour to Camrose

By [Jessica Ryan](#), Camrose Canadian

Wednesday, December 2, 2015 10:29:10 MST AM



Juno Award winning musician Susan Aglukark performs at the Lougheed Centre at 8 p.m. on Dec. 5. (Supplied)

Unlike many artists, famed Northern Canadian singer/songwriter Susan Aglukark created a Christmas album early in her career, back in 1992. The intervening years have given her a new perspective on the season, and she released *Dreaming of Home* in 2013.

Aglukark is on a five-stop Christmas tour of Alberta that will bring her to the Jeanne and Peter Lougheed Centre on Dec. 5.

During the performance, the audience will have the chance to hear the stories behind the song selections such as the title track, “I’m Dreaming of Home” which Aglukark first performed in 2007 at Vimy Ridge.

“It is a combination of honouring our members (of the armed forces) both past and present and current, but also them honouring Christmas Day in their own way.”

Over the years, Aglukark said she has found that while people across Canada celebrate Christmas in different ways, “for the most part for us, it’s about family and being home.”

Home, for Aglukark, has been Ontario for the last 20 years, yet she finds herself homesick for the small town Nunavut of her childhood over the holidays.

“Christmas is relatively new to Inuit people, and we’ve adopted a lot of non-Inuit ways of celebrating,” she said. “But also, I want to share that Christmas is a different experience for those of us who celebrate away from home, and often that’s the common theme for a lot of people in the audience. It’s a different kind of choice of songs for this Christmas album for those reasons.”

Aglukark was from a musical family of seven children headed by Pentecostal minister parents, but came to a career in music unexpectedly.

“I knew in my heart I was an artist,” she said. “We don’t nurture the dreamer in our small town, isolated environments, and often, because we don’t nurture the dreamer, we don’t pursue the dream.”

She moved to Ottawa from Rankin Inlet and Arviat, Nunavut, and was working as a translator for the federal government when an opportunity to make an album presented itself (Arctic Rose, 1993).

“Subconsciously, I was engaging an outlet to deal with the demons, if you will, that I had been running from, and the outlet was writing and songwriting, and there I was with an album.”

The Arctic Rose album turned into a small tour, then a record deal and then a career that has spanned the last two decades of Aglukark’s life.

For the first couple of years, she felt a lot of pressure, much of it self-imposed, to be “everything to everyone.”

“I felt that I was so lucky that I had landed in the life that I had, after leaving small town Nunavut and having left what I left behind, that I had the guilty conscience of a successful person,” she said. “What I ended up doing was trying too hard to do everything that I possibly could to give back. A lot of it was that I wanted to be a role model, but how could I possibly be a role model when I was just learning how to be an artist?”

Since then, she has learned to cope with the expectations of others as well as manage her own.

“It’s been all kinds of journeys these last 20 years, not the least of which is knowing that I have a responsibility to share my experience with my fellow young Inuit, who want to pursue this career or any real dream life. It’s been easier having allowed myself to accept that it has to be on my terms, and I reached that point quite some time ago.”

One of the ways Aglukark exercises her responsibility is the Arctic Rose project, a quarterly initiative, including an annual Christmas food bank campaign, of partnering with grassroots, 100 per cent volunteer groups in Nunavut with the goal of getting people in small communities to engage in community life.

Susan Aglukark performs at the Lougheed Centre at 8 p.m. on Dec. 5. Tickets are \$39 for adults, \$36 for students and seniors. Visit camroselive.ca or call 780-608-2922 for more information.

Direct Link: <http://www.camrosecanadian.com/2015/12/02/aglukark-brings-christmas-album-tour-to-camrose>

Inuit Broadcasting Corp. opens new media centre in Iqaluit

IBC unveils new state-of-the-art media centre in Nunavut's capital

By John Van Dusen, [CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 03, 2015 9:55 AM CT Last Updated: Dec 03, 2015 10:42 AM CT



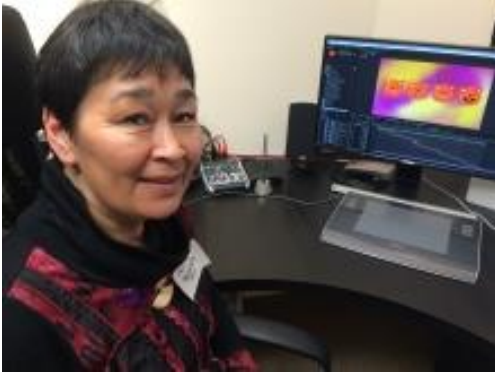
After years of fundraising the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation unveiled its new, state-of-the-art media centre in Iqaluit Wednesday. (Inuit Broadcasting Corporation/Facebook)

The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation unveiled its new state-of-the-art media centre in Iqaluit Wednesday.

Now, Johnny the Lemming has a new home.

After years of fundraising, IBC, which produces original Inuktitut programming, including the long running children's program, Takuginai, featuring the famous lemming, opened its building along Federal Road to the public with a grand opening ceremony.

The building features a TV studio, audio, translation, editing and animation booths and a climate-controlled archive room.



The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation's vice president, Bernadette Dean, shows off one of its new animation booths.

"I can only say there'll be higher quality and better quality production of Inuit language television or film and this is what this building will offer to all of us," said IBC's vice president, Bernadette Dean.

The centre has raised \$7.3 million to date, with a goal of reaching \$8.6 million.

The additional money will go towards more equipment and media training.

Ippiksaut Frisen has worked in the animation industry for a few years and hopes the new building will offer more opportunities for people to get involved in media.

"I'm hoping that there will be a lot more interest and a lot more curiosity, and I hope that it will just get bigger and bigger," she said.

The building also provides a chance to keep up with a rapidly changing industry.

"IBC started when our language was a lot stronger," Dean said.

"There's so much more opportunity for Inuit to maintain our language, to promote it, to revitalize it, using mediums like television, film, audio or animation to promote our language, the Inuktitut language."



The building has a TV studio where popular children's show Takuginai is shot.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/ibc-opens-new-media-centre-1.3348751>

Aboriginal Business & Finance

First Nations leaders discuss economic development in Saskatoon

By [Ryan Kessler](#) Reporter Global News, November 26, 2015 5:24 pm



SASKATOON – Aboriginal business leaders gathered at TCU Place to share expertise and success stories related to economic development corporations in First Nations communities. The corporations are the arm of local government responsible for creating and attracting business in an area.

Chief Darcy Bear of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation offered Thursday morning's keynote address.

"We want jobs and opportunities like any other Canadian citizen," Bear said.

In 2004, Whitecap signed on for the federal government's *Land Management Act*, allowing the community to lease and tax land. It also permitted infrastructure investments in things like roads, sewers and street lights.

Since that time, unemployment in Whitecap has shrunk from 70 per cent to just five per cent now, according to Bear.

"There's no better role model for our children than to see mom and dad go to work on a daily basis. You can see the pride," Bear said.

Legislative changes striking down restrictive sections of the Indian Act have also led to greater autonomy and prosperity for Canada's First Nations, according to Clint Davis, vice-president of aboriginal banking at TD Bank.

"The size of the economy is expected to be, for next year, \$30 billion. The driver of that is business and it's economic development corporations, which is fantastic," Davis said.

A growing, young indigenous workforce is quickly becoming the target of post-secondary business programs, he adds.

"The next big thing is the wave of young people that are going to take control of leadership in this space and be successful," Davis said.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2364377/first-nations-leaders-discuss-economic-development-in-saskatoon/>

Entrepreneur's peers warned her she wouldn't be successful

BRENDA LAROSE, Contributed to The Globe and Mail

Published Friday, Nov. 27, 2015 5:00AM EST

Last updated Friday, Nov. 27, 2015 1:01PM EST

As an Anishinaabe Métis woman, I am a proud indigenous Canadian. Born in Winnipeg and raised in Regina, I had lived in many cities across Canada and have worked in recruitment and search for 28 years. In 1996, I returned to Winnipeg and found myself working in executive search with one of the larger human resources consulting firms.

It struck me one day that there was a need to specialize in placing clients from diverse backgrounds. I saw the talent in the indigenous community of Winnipeg but no one was tapping into it. I believed this would be an exciting opportunity for the firm and I was willing to build this new area of business.

However, working for a consulting firm meant that if I launched into this, most of my hours needed to be spent on work for which the company could charge their clients. The owners didn't believe this was a profitable venture but they were in agreement as long as I did it on my own time. So I did.

This initiative quickly became a success. Government departments, crown corporations, academic and financial institutions and resource companies looking to diversify their workforce and build bridges into the aboriginal community were keen to find qualified indigenous candidates for executive positions and boards. After a couple of years, about 30 per cent of the revenue of the firm was related to indigenous business and search, not just in Manitoba, but right across Canada.

The word got out in our community that I was leading this initiative and providing opportunities for our peoples. About once a week, someone would spontaneously show up at our office to drop off resumes of their relatives who were accountants, engineers, lawyers and other professionals.

Despite the new business, not everyone was thrilled about these visitors to the office. At the end of the day one Friday, a colleague warned me, "You can't have these native people sitting in our reception area."

I am never at a loss for words, but I was that afternoon. I went home hurt and angry. I decided on Sunday to offer my resignation Monday morning.

I would start my own firm and do what I love and know best. That was in May of 1999 and I decided to work from my home since I was a startup with no capital to invest in a lease. If the business was not successful by the fall, when my two teenage sons would head back to high school, I would look for other work.

Some of the challenges I faced were typical of a startup. I couldn't solicit my clients from the other firm by virtue of the contract I had signed. My competitors warned me that existing without an office was unprofessional and told me I would not be successful. Getting financing was tough, too, as several banks turned down my request for a line of credit although my credit was good and I had savings. But business quickly boomed, in a few months I had to hire staff.

Ten years ago, after my son Brock Higgins finished playing junior hockey and graduated from university, he joined me in the firm. This has been one most rewarding personal experiences in my business. I have been able to watch him become great in his work and love what he does. I get to talk and collaborate with him almost daily and Brock is now a major shareholder. He is based in our Ottawa office and is now the managing partner nationally. We both have a strong desire and vision to grow the firm, but are always mindful and incorporate the day-to-day teaching of our elders.

Over the last 17 years our firm has established a very strong national brand in our indigenous community. We have successfully placed more diverse senior executives and

board members across a wide range of sectors than any other firm in Canada. Five years ago, with approximately 75 per cent of our revenue related to indigenous and other diversity search, we made a conscious decision to do more mainstream work. We believe in ensuring cross-pollination of people between our communities and mainstream Canada. It was time to break the silos. So, a couple of years ago, we partnered with Leaders & Co. Executive Search, which brings an international brand recognition and an innovative search methodology.

Initially, I resented my previous company for having pushed me in this direction, given the challenges and frustrations. But slowly I came to the realization that I would have never had the desire or courage to start the business on my own. Looking back now, I believe the whole situation and events were a huge gift and that it was the creator's plan all along.

Brenda LaRose is managing partner of [Higgins](#), an executive search and board search company located in Winnipeg and Ottawa.

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/small-business/sb-managing/human-resources/metis-woman-goes-it-alone-to-create-aboriginal-staffing-agency/article27156834/>

First Nations drummers head to China on Thunder Bay sister city mission

Cultural exchange can open economic opportunities in China, aboriginal liaison says

[CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 01, 2015 12:22 PM ET Last Updated: Dec 01, 2015 12:22 PM ET



A contingent of aboriginal youth from Thunder Bay and Fort William First Nation in Ontario are heading to China to represent the city. (Chondon Photography)

A group of aboriginal youth from Thunder Bay, Ont. and neighbouring Fort William First Nation are travelling to Jiaozuo, China, as part of a sister city delegation representing the City of Thunder Bay.

The trip includes eight First Nations drummers who will bring sights and sounds rarely seen and heard in China.

Bess Legarde, one of the youth dancers taking part, said the trip is both a way to show off her traditions and build links with another culture.

The group will depart Tuesday, spend four days in Jiaozuo and then three days in China's capital, Beijing, before returning home. Their itinerary includes dancing on the Great Wall.

Ann Magiskan, aboriginal liaison for the City of Thunder Bay, said the group has been fundraising and gathering sponsors for the trip since April.

Magiskan said sending a cultural delegation to visit China can also help open doors for local business.

"We want to keep the doorways open to other countries, to establish these relationships, which will assist in ongoing economic development and ongoing trade partnership plans."

Magiskan says that Thunder Bay already has four sister cities throughout the world, and Jiaozuo was in consideration as the fifth sister city long before her office was contacted to take part in this trip.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/sister-city-jiaozuo-first-nations-1.3345167>

Ontario Chamber of Commerce mining report calls for more investment

Report also calls for revenue-sharing agreement with First Nations

[CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 01, 2015 8:37 AM ET Last Updated: Dec 01, 2015 8:37 AM ET



The Ontario Chamber of Commerce is pushing for more investment in the province's mining industry. (Noront Resources)

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce is calling on government to do more to encourage mining development in the province, including in the Ring of Fire.

In a report released Tuesday, the chamber says both the province and the federal government need to invest in the struggling mining sector.

Chamber president Allan O'Dette says he hopes the chamber's recommendations will be reflected when the province renews its mineral development strategy.

"We think that a focus on infrastructure in particular in northern Ontario will also help us be prepared for the future," he said.

The recommendations include:

- Create a revenue-sharing framework between government and First Nations "to provide certainty surrounding the benefits that these communities will gain from mineral resource development."
- Increase tax credits meant to encourage investment in exploration companies.
- Increase Ontario's investment in mining research and innovation.
- Use "global demand for Ontario mining expertise" to create new business.

O'Dette said the Ring of Fire is critically important, but that this report is also about the broader mining sector, which he notes is worth billions to the province.

He says he hopes the change in federal government will inspire renewed co-operation between all levels of government.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/ontario-chamber-commerce-1.3344901>

On the Street: Aboriginal tourism unveils expert program

Darron Kloster / Times Colonist
December 3, 2015 06:00 AM

The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia used its annual meeting to unveil a new travel expert program, designed to give tourism operators the tools to offer First Nations context to their visitors. The program was created to help operators connect their clients with authentic aboriginal culture by introducing new experiences that let visitors live, learn and share in the heart and soul of aboriginal history.

The association also handed out its annual awards, including a pair going to Island firms. Tourism Victoria won the industry partner award and Walters Cove Resort in Kyuquot won the outdoor adventures award.

Meanwhile, chairwoman Brenda Baptiste is returning the board along with Lillian Hunt, George Taylor, Mike Willie, Robin Louie, Inez Cook, Leslie Brown, Sharon Bond and Lori Simcox. The new members are Jordan Point, Douglas Green and James Cowpar.

New brew

Category 12 Brewing has launched its eighth beer with Induction Dubbel, a traditional Belgian style with maroon colour and the flavours of brown sugar and dark fruit. The brew is now available at the Category 12 taproom, in 650-ml bottles at private liquor stores and on draught in select locations.

Meet at the Zed

The funkiest hotel in the city is expanding its appeal with a new feature to attract business travellers and small conferences. The Hotel Zed is trying to lure meeting planners to consider the Douglas Street hotel with the “Think Tank,” a space that invites groups to meet and work on the next big thing while surrounded by fun and funky décor. The space is available between October and April for groups of up to eight. It comes with white boards, a digital projector, access ports to connect to wall-mounted TVs with surround sound, high-speed Wi-Fi, unlimited free coffee and a keepsake Polaroid picture of the meeting team taken by the hotel staff. The room can be rented for a day (\$200) or half day (\$150).

On the move

After 30 years downtown at the corner of Fort and Vancouver streets, Green Horwood & Co LLP Chartered Professional Accountants is moving to the third floor of 710 Redbrick St., formerly the head office of League Financial. At the same time, partner Keith Smith said Green Horwood is welcoming Larkin & Nast Chartered Professional Accountants as members of the firm.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/business/on-the-street-aboriginal-tourism-unveils-expert-program-1.2124948#sthash.I5hX1RTR.dpuf>

Aboriginal Community Development

Saskatoon aims to increase the number of streets with indigenous names

[Sean Trembath, Saskatoon StarPhoenix](#)

Published on: November 27, 2015 | Last Updated: November 27, 2015 6:45 AM CST



Coun. Mairin Loewen speaks at City Council on March 23, 2015. Michelle Berg / Michelle Berg / The StarPhoenix

Priscilla Settee says a plan by the city to increase the number of Saskatoon streets and public spaces with indigenous names is a step in the right direction.

“I’m very happy to hear this,” said Settee, a professor of indigenous studies at the University of Saskatchewan.



University of Saskatchewan professor, Priscilla Settee. Gord Waldner / Saskatoon StarPhoenix

The plan is part of a review of the city’s naming process that is expected to be tabled at Wednesday’s meeting of city council’s planning and development committee.

If approved, it would include a promotional campaign targeted at local indigenous organizations, encouraging them to submit ideas for the Names Master List, from which new names are drawn. A diversity consultant would also be added to the administrative component of the city’s naming process, and opportunities offered for cultural ceremonies at the unveiling of any such names.

Something as simple as a street name can go a long way toward spreading awareness of history, Settee said.

“It becomes a public form of education for people who haven’t really thought about these things.”

Anyone is able to submit names to be considered by a committee for the city’s master list. When the time comes to name a street or a public facility, the final decision is made by the mayor.

Councillor Mairin Loewen said broadening the scope of names used in the city is a relatively easy way to promote diversity.

“This is just one of the things I see as the low-hanging fruit we can and, I think, should tackle,” she said.

The recommendation for more indigenous names, which appeared in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action earlier this year, came up in a September meeting of city council’s executive committee. Loewen successfully lobbied the committee for a report from city administration in a year’s time that will look at whether any progress has been made.



Councillor Mairin Loewen speaks at city council on Sept. 21st, 2015. Liam Richards / The StarPhoenix

“Ultimately, the effectiveness of this move will be measured in how many of these names are actually applied,” Loewen said Thursday.

Much of the success of the initiative will depend on public uptake.

“Ultimately, the system still relies on members of the public to bring names forward,” Loewen said.

Settee said increasing the number of indigenous names around Saskatoon is a positive move, but needs to be part of a larger recognition of indigenous history.

“It’s a good start, but of course it can’t end there.”

Direct Link: <http://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/saskatoon-aims-to-increase-the-number-of-streets-with-indigenous-names>

Cuthand: Give a warm welcome to the Syrian refugees

[Doug Cuthand, Saskatoon StarPhoenix](#)

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Doug Cuthand Liam Richards / The StarPhoenix

I find it very disturbing that genuine concern for the plight of Syrian refugees has degenerated to so much fearmongering and racism. As a First Nations person I am no stranger to both.

Canada is a settler nation that was built on First Nations' land. Treaties were signed and agreements were made. We believed that we would share our land with the newcomers. The newcomers, however, felt that they had "dominion" over the land and its resources. They also wanted to keep it an Anglo-Saxon nation, free of non-whites and others including Eastern Europeans, Jews and people that weren't from Mother England.

The policy was bound to fail as the huge land opened up for settlement, and immigrants moved in from Britain, Europe and the United States. The First Nations were pushed aside, and Canada remained largely a European nation until after the Second World War.

The postwar years saw the biggest change in our demographics, with people displaced by war and immigrants from South Asia and the Far East seeking refuge in Canada. What's now Pearson International Airport became known as Haven's Gate, and a Canadian passport was seen by pickpockets as the most valuable in the world.

We raised our family in Saskatoon's Confederation Park area in the 1980s and '90s. This neighbourhood on Saskatoon's west side became a favourite of new arrivals. Our children played with kids from Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and India. Later, the Bosnians and Croatians would move in. Next came people from Afghanistan and Somalia. Each group brought something new to the neighbourhood and the diversity grew.

No doubt the Syrians will move in soon, and the neighbourhood will be richer for it.

While it may sound odd that a First Nations person would make the case for increased immigration, we need more diversity in Canada. Diversity brings tolerance and understanding, something we need more of. Besides, I get tired of the hackneyed jokes about First Nations and immigration, although I wish our ancestors had told Spanish Conquistadors, fur traders and explorers that we didn't want single adult men. Maybe things would have worked out differently.

In any event, while there was an international movement of people into Canada, there was also an internal migration that saw people move from First Nations communities to the cities. Their quest was similar to that of international refugees. They, too, were looking for employment, better services and a better way of life. In effect they were moving from one nation to another.

But there was no welcoming scene at the airport, support groups or any special programs — just an old, battered pickup truck with some furniture in the box and the husband, wife and kids jammed into the cab. One day city residents woke up to the fact that they had an aboriginal population working and existing among them.

While international refugees were eager to integrate, we were strangers in our land. The colonial office practised a policy of integration, but it was done at the loss of our own language and culture. Integration became assimilation, and our people pushed back.

Today our culture and beliefs are making a comeback. Institutions such as the First Nations University of Canada and individuals across Saskatchewan are promoting our culture, so that we are no longer the poor cousins but able to integrate and be Canadians on our own terms.

Every new group within the Canadian family follows three steps: The first generation strives to survive; the second adapts; and the third thrives. We are beginning to notice this occurring within the First Nations as well.

People the world over search for two constants — love and security. It doesn't matter if you live on a reserve, a Syrian refugee camp, or an upscale part of your city. Love and security are life's goals.

In the next few weeks Canada will see another wave of refugees. They need to feel the love and enjoy the sense of freedom and security that we take for granted.

Direct Link: <http://thestarphoenix.com/opinion/columnists/1127-edit-cuthand-col>

Homicide rate 6 times higher for aboriginal Canadians: StatsCan



CTVNews.ca Staff

Published Wednesday, November 25, 2015 10:49AM EST

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Aboriginal Canadians were victims of homicide at a rate approximately six times higher than non-aboriginals in 2014, according to new findings from Statistics Canada that show nearly one quarter of homicide victims were aboriginal – a group that accounts for only five per cent of the country's population.

[The Canadian homicides report](#), released Wednesday, marks the first year the survey has had complete police-reported data on the aboriginal identity of victims and people accused of homicide. In addition, police-reported data on the aboriginal identity of female homicide victims is now available from 1980 to 2013.

In total, Canadian police services reported 516 homicides in 2014. Of that, 117 people -- or 23 per cent -- were reported by police as aboriginal.



Winnipeg Police officers are seen at a crime scene in Winnipeg in this undated photo.

The data also showed that aboriginal males were in the greatest risk group: They were seven times more likely to be homicide victims -- compared with non-aboriginal males -- and three times more likely than aboriginal females.

The report also found that a higher proportion of aboriginal homicides were solved by police compared to non-aboriginal victims. For both aboriginal and non-aboriginal groups, the majority of solved homicides were perpetrated by someone who was known to the victim.

The incidence of homicide by other family members was also more common among female aboriginals.

In addition, one-third (32 per cent) of people accused of homicides in 2014 were aboriginal, the report found.

The chart below shows the number of murdered aboriginal women has stayed relatively the same, compared to the number of non-aboriginal women.

Plans for national inquiry

The report comes as the new Liberal government looks to announce a national inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Carolyn Bennett said earlier in November, that she's hoping to announce a pre-inquiry consultation process within the next few months.

In general, Canada's homicide rate remained stable, with 2013 and 2014, posting the lowest homicide rates since 1966.

This chart shows Canada's overall homicide rate. it excludes the victims of the 1985 Air India bombing.

Direct Link: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/homicide-rate-6-times-higher-for-aboriginal-canadians-statscan-1.2673751>

Nunavut's Leah Idlout, caring mother, friend of many, dies Nov. 23

Seamstress, teacher, artist, author and interpreter-translator, Leah Idlout touched many lives

KENN HARPER, November 30, 2015 - 7:00 am



Leah Idlout: July 23, 1939 — Nov. 23, 2015. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE IDLOUT FAMILY)

A well-known Northerner has passed away. Leah Idlout died in the hospital in Iqaluit Nov. 23 at the age of 76.

She will be remembered by many in the North and South as an interpreter and translator. But she was much more: a caring mother, friend, seamstress, teacher, artist and author.

Leah was born on July 24, 1939 to Joseph Idlout (known simply as Idlout) and his wife Qidlaq at the north Baffin camp of Aulatsiivik near Pond Inlet.

Her father would later be described as “the best hunter, trapper and traveller on north Baffin” and a man of “vigorous personality.” He is the camp leader in Doug Wilkinson’s classic book, *Land of the Long Day* (1956) and the film of the same name. Leah is the young girl chopping ice for drinking water in the opening minutes of the film.

Five families usually made up the isolated camp, about 30 people. They passed their summers in skin tents and the winters in makeshift sod and wooden houses banked with snow. The house where Leah grew up was only nine feet by 12, but was home to the hunter, his wife and five of their children.

The family was affluent — Idlout owned a 40-foot gas-powered boat and an 18-ft. outboard canoe. It was a perfect time to be a child in the last days of traditional camp life in the High Arctic.

But the idyll would soon end. When she was 12, Leah was diagnosed with tuberculosis at Pond Inlet when the C. D. Howe medical ship made its annual inspection visit. As was customary, patients left on the ship, often on the same day as their examination. Leah described the traumatic events of her departure many years later:

“...It all happened so fast, I scarcely had time to think ... I was totally unprepared and didn’t even have any baggage to take along...

“I hardly remember anything that was happening or being said to me at the time of departure, except that my dear oldest sister Rebecca was crying. Was I going away for good? I didn’t feel sick. Was I going to die in the white man’s hospital? It terrified me to think of these things... I had never felt so alone before.”

Leah’s home for the next while would be Parc Savard Hospital in Quebec City. These were sad years for many Inuit, far from home in southern facilities.

But Leah had survived tuberculosis, while many others did not. She had also learned English very well. Ironically, some years later, she would be employed as an interpreter on the very ship that had taken her on that first traumatic trip south.

Soon Leah returned to the south again, this time for surgery. When she was well enough to be an out-patient, her Qallunaat foster parents, coincidentally Doug Wilkinson and his wife, wanted to adopt her, but she returned north to her family instead.

In 1955, Leah’s father, Idlout, decided to move his family to Resolute, where there was employment at the military base, and where Inuit had recently been re-located from northern Quebec. They travelled overland in the spring to Arctic Bay where they were picked up by the C. D. Howe for the rest of the trip.

In Resolute, Ross Gibson, an RCMP officer, suggested that Leah teach school. And so, while still a teenager, Leah became the first teacher in the tiny community.

In 1958, the National Film Board did a photo-story, *English Lessons* with Leah, on her teaching experience there.

Many decades later, Leah reminisced on those times: “We learned together. As we went along. I learned from them what to teach, what their interests were.”

In the 1960s, Leah’s language skills stood her in good stead, and she left Resolute. She worked as a medical interpreter in Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit,) before moving south, working in both Ottawa and Quebec City.

In Ottawa she worked at the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources with linguists Gilles Lefebvre and Raymond Gagné and Inuit such as Elijah Erklou and Mary Panigusiq on the development of the Tentative Standard Orthography, a Roman orthography designed to replace Syllabics.

One of the projects she worked on was the Q-Book or Qaujivallirutiksat, a basic handbook of civics, housekeeping and life skills for Inuit just moving from traditional camps into settlements; many elders will remember that volume. In 1962 the Department also published in the new orthography a 14-page school book that Leah wrote herself called Imirqutailakuluk nanuaalullu; it had earlier been published in English translation as *The Little Arctic Tern, The Big Polar Bear*.

In 1965, Leah had a son, Terry, later adopted by her sister, Rebecca Qitsualik. Three years later, she married Maurice d'Argencourt.

They lived most of their marriage in Quebec City and the marriage produced three children, Guy, Madeleine and Lucie. Unfortunately the marriage ended in divorce in 1980.

A second marriage, to John Paulson in 1991 in Ottawa, drifted into separation in 2010. Like many of her generation who had endured rapid cultural change, Leah had alcohol problems off and on for much of her adult life, as did Mr. Paulson. Shortly after their marriage they adopted a relative, Nolan, as their adoptive son.

Leah worked as editor of *Inuit Today* magazine and also wrote for the magazine. She worked for some time as clerk and interpreter-translator for the City of Iqaluit, and also as an independent interpreter/translator.

She was a founder of Pauktuutit, the Inuit Women's Association, and a founder of the Inuit Non-Profit Housing Association.

All too often interpreters are not given the recognition they deserve. Not so on June 15, 2010, when Senator Charlie Watt rose in the Red Chamber to say, "I want to thank early translators in Ottawa, especially Mary Panigusiq, Leah Idlout and Sarah Ekoomiak. Back in the 1960s, I had the pleasure of working with these ladies."

Leah is survived by her children Guy (Papatsi Kublu-Hill), Madeleine (George Kuksuk) and Lucie, Nolan and Terry; by grandchildren Seané d'Argencourt-Printup, Katia d'Argencourt, Anika d'Argencourt, Aven Adams, Haily Kublu, and Thomasie Nagliniq.

She is also survived by four siblings: Susan Salluviniq of Resolute, Moses Idlout of Inukjuag, Paul Idlout of Iqaluit, and Ruth Cookie of Kuujjuarapik. She is remembered by friends throughout the Arctic and southern Canada.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavuts_leah_idlout_caring_mother_friend_of_many_dies_nov._23/

Torngat Mountains National Park marks 10th anniversary

Labrador park name comes from Inuktitut word 'torngait', which means 'place of spirits'

By Waubgeshig Rice, [CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 01, 2015 10:31 AM ET Last Updated: Dec 01, 2015 11:38 AM ET

A national park in a distant corner of the country that highlights the ancestral lands and culture of the Inuit is celebrating its tenth anniversary.

This month marks ten years since the establishment of Torngat Mountains National Park in northern Labrador, and it's a proud milestone for staff, visitors, and people from the Inuit region of Nunatsiavut.



A guided hike through Torngat Mountains National Park. (Waubgeshig Rice, CBC News)

"It's very gratifying to be able to tell the rest of the world and Canada the story of Inuit in this area, and to be able to show a part of this culture, it really gives me pride," said Gary Baikie. He is the visitor experience manager with Parks Canada, and is originally from Nain, south of the park.

Covering 9,700 square kilometres of epic mountainous terrain on the northern tip of Labrador, Torngat Mountains National Park Reserve was created December 1, 2005, when the Labrador Inuit Land Claims agreement came into effect. It gained full national park status in 2008.

The Inuit presence in the Torngat Mountains goes back thousands of years. At the park guides show visitors traditional hunting and gathering places, while other staff teach and perform cultural traditions, like throat-singing demonstrations. Parks Canada aims to have Torngat Mountains National Park fully staffed by Inuit by the end of the year.

Baikie came on board in 2006. "For me personally, I'm in love with the place," he added. "It's surreal to be able to come here, work here, and get paid for it."



An electric fence surrounds base camp at Torngat Mountains National Park. (Waubgeshig Rice, CBC News)

Accessible only by plane or ship, the park features towering mountains, deep valleys and fjords, glaciers and icebergs, and dynamic wildlife including whales, seals, and polar and black bears.

The park base camp is equipped with an electric fence to keep out the bears, and armed bear guards accompany visitors on every hike or excursion outside the camp.

'Place of spirits'

Along with the natural beauty, the Inuit who visit and work for the park are always thrilled to explain their cultural connection to their ancestral homeland. The name Torngat comes from the Inuktitut word "torngait", which means "place of spirits".



Simeonie Merkuratsuk, 16, visits Torngat Mountains National Park as part of a youth camp. (Waubgeshig Rice, CBC News)

"It's so amazing, and I just feel happy that I'm being here," said 16-year-old Simeonie Merkuratsuk, who visited the park as part of a youth camp.

"It is important because I love to be around family, because this is where my family belongs," he added. "They were born here and everything else, and I think this just needs to be going on."

Nancy Kooktook agrees. She first visited the park in 2012 as a cultural performer, and started working in the Torngats for Parks Canada the year after.

"It's always good to be here. It feels like home," she said. "It connects to my grandfather's background, so I like coming here."

To ensure an Inuit influence on the park's management and operation, Parks Canada and the Nunatsiavut government appointed a seven-member co-operative management board to advise the federal government.



Aerial view of Torngat Mountains National Park (Waubgeshig Rice, CBC News)

"It's a special place for all Inuit," said Derrick Pottle, a board member from Rigolet. "You go there, and you feel the power of the land, and you appreciate the strength and the magnificence and the beauty of it. It's not only in the Torngat Mountains, but it's all over our homeland. It's everywhere. Wherever you go, everything is unique and something special."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/torngat-mountains-national-park-marks-10th-anniversary-1.3312649>

Stand together: regional chief

By [Mehreen Shahid](#), Orillia Packet & Times

Monday, November 30, 2015 8:08:34 EST PM



MEHREEN SHAHID/THE PACKET & TIMES Karen Restoule, senior adviser in legal affairs for the Chiefs of Ontario, and Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day spoke to about 70 students at Georgian College's Orillia campus Monday.

It's time to stop pointing fingers and to stand united about the issues affecting indigenous peoples of Canada.

That's the message delivered to an audience Monday at Georgian College in Orillia. The messenger: Chief Isadore Day, who represents Ontario's First Nations at the Assembly of First Nations.

"We want what all people want," said Day, "to raise happy, healthy children. The government just spent millions of dollars setting up stations in Jordan, but what's happening to our people here in the country?"

Speaking at an event to remember the country's missing and murdered aboriginal women, Day said First Nations people hoped every promise made over the years to launch an inquiry into the matter would be honoured by the government. Frustrated by the lack of effort from the previous, Conservative government, victims' families decided to take action on their own. Led by First Nations leaders in Ontario, a process was initiated, which evolved into the "Who is She" campaign in September.

The initiative seeks to educate people about root causes of violence against aboriginal women. It also seeks to raise money to generate a pool of information that will help guide families and the government through the inquiry process this summer, noted Day.

"When the decision was made, we were quite decisive and clear that this was going to be based on the families telling us what they want, what they need in the process," he said.

What do the families want? Simply, to have their voices heard and pain made known.

Hopeful now that a government has responded to their pleas and vowed to launch an inquiry, they want to make sure they don't slip through the cracks.

"Families want to know the process will be theirs and not just meet the requirements of the government in terms of truth finding," Day said. "They want the process to be

supportive of families affected by the tragedies. They want to know what their options are if the inquiry doesn't answer all their questions."

Karen Restoule, senior adviser in legal affairs for the Chiefs of Ontario, believes the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have misinformed Canadians by saying their reports are accurate. Rather, Restoule said, an Amnesty International report points out the RCMP has missed crucial aspects of the problem, such as statistics from areas where it has no jurisdiction and testimonies from families.

"I think allowing the voices of the people who have been impacted is absolutely crucial and necessary," she said.

The dialogue over the years in Canada and Ontario has broadened to the point the premier of Ontario is willing to pledge money to launch discussions around it, she added.

Restoule praised Georgian students for what they've done so far.

"You're already contributing in a positive way to the issue. You're willing to be here with an open heart and open mind and find out more about how you can take action and contribute," she told the crowd of about 70.

Lisa Howlett, a first-year community and justice services student, said the cause is close to her heart, as she has First Nations friends.

"My first step in helping is to sign this letter to the prime minister," she said, holding a petition with a letter addressing Justin Trudeau on the back, which she distributed during the presentation. "I will keep a copy of it on my car window to bring awareness wherever I go."

Direct Link: <http://www.orilliapacket.com/2015/11/30/stand-together-regional-chief>

Statistics Canada data shows significant differences for aboriginal population

[Ian Graham](#) / Thompson Citizen
December 2, 2015 10:55 AM

Aboriginal people are younger, more likely to live in crowded housing and more likely to smoke and to drink heavily than rest of the population as a whole, data released by Statistics Canada shows.

They are also more likely not to drink at all, not to have any post-secondary credentials and to be in foster care, according the data, which comes from the 2011 National

Household Survey and the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, which did not include First Nations people who live on reserve.

There were 1,409,100 self-identified aboriginal people in Canada in 2011, including 859,970 First Nations people, 451,795 Métis people and 59,445 Inuit people, as well as 26,485 who reported other aboriginal identities and 11,415 who reported more than one aboriginal identity. Over the five years preceding the 2011 survey, the First Nations population increased 23 per cent, the Inuit population 18 per cent and the Métis population 16 per cent. Nearly half of aboriginal people are under the age of 25, including 49 per cent of First Nations people (52 per cent of those living on-reserve), and 45 per cent of Inuit people. The median age for First Nations people was 25.8 as a whole, while it was 22.8 for Inuit people, 23.8 for on-reserve First Nations people, 27.1 for off-reserve First Nations people and 31.4 for Métis people. The median age of Canada's non-aboriginal population was 40.6.

Of the 75 per cent of First Nations people who said they were Treaty Indians or Registered Indians as defined by the *Indian Act*, 50 per cent lived on reserve compared to 38 per cent of First Nations people as a whole. Housing conditions on First Nations and in the North had the greatest percentage of overcrowded housing, defined as more than one person per room, with 28 per cent of First Nations people on reserve and 30 per cent of Inuit living in such housing, compared to seven per cent of off-reserve First Nations people, three per cent of Métis people and four per cent of the non-aboriginal population. Forty-three per cent of First Nations living on reserve lived in houses needing major repairs compared to 15 per cent off reserve, 30 per cent of Inuit people, and 13 per cent of Métis.

Fifty-eight per cent of Inuit children under 14 lived with both parents, compared to 57 per cent of Métis people and 43 per cent of First Nations people. For non-aboriginal people the rate is 74 per cent. Thirty-seven per cent of First Nations children, 30 per cent of Métis children and 26 per cent of Inuit children lived in one-parent households, while for the non-aboriginal population the rate is 17 per cent. Aboriginal children are also much more likely than non-aboriginal children to live in foster care, with aboriginal children accounting for 48 per cent of all children in foster care in Canada. Of those, 82 per cent are First Nations. Six per cent of First Nations people living off reserve and four per cent of aboriginal children under 14 as a whole were in foster care at the time this data was collected.

Nearly half of aboriginal people aged 25 to 64 have a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree, including 55 per cent of Métis people in this age group, 45 per cent of First Nations and 36 per cent of Inuit. The corresponding rate in the non-aboriginal population is 65 per cent. Forty-seven per cent of First Nations people on reserve and 49 per cent of Inuit didn't have any certificate, degree or diploma, while for Métis people the rate was 21 per cent and for non-aboriginal people it was 12 per cent. Aboriginal people with post-secondary credentials had employment rates lower than non-aboriginal people with the same level of education, and the same was true for those without certificates, diplomas or degrees of any kind.

Almost half (49 per cent) of Inuit people surveyed smoked daily, compared to 27 per cent of off-reserve First Nations people, 26 per cent of Métis people and 15 per cent on non-aboriginal people. Heavy drinkers (those who had five drinks or more on any occasion in the previous year) made up 35 per cent of the off-reserve First Nations population, 39 per cent of the Inuit population, 30 per cent of the Métis population and 23 per cent of the non-aboriginal populations. Thirty-eight per cent of Inuit, 31 per cent of First Nations people off reserve and 25 per cent of Métis people were non-drinkers while in the non-aboriginal population the rate was 24 per cent.

- See more at: <http://www.thompsoncitizen.net/news/thompson/statistics-canada-data-shows-significant-differences-for-aboriginal-population-1.2123986#sthash.leEDI1rh.dpuf>

Woman wears headscarf in solidarity with Muslim women

[Charles Hamilton, Saskatoon StarPhoenix](#)

Published on: December 3, 2015 | Last Updated: December 3, 2015 6:38 AM CST



SASKATOON, SK--NOVEMBER 02, 2015 - Jackie Crowe is a Metis woman in Saskatoon who has taken to wearing the Hijab in solidarity with Muslim women in Canada. Greg Pender / Saskatoon StarPhoenix

Jackie Crowe is not Muslim. She's Metis. But for the last three days, she's been wearing a hijab — a Muslim-style head scarf — in an effort to show solidarity with Muslim Canadians.

"I think mostly I'm wearing it to let people know that Muslim people are our friends," Crowe said.

Stories about racism and violence against Muslim women in the wake of the Paris attacks have become far too common, Crowe said, and she wants to let Muslim people know that most Canadians are good, kind people. She also wants to educate other people about the need for diversity and cultural understanding.

As a Metis woman living in Saskatoon, Crowe said she too has experienced racism and she wanted, at least in some small way, to show solidarity with women who choose to wear a head scarf.

“We shouldn’t be treating people differently based on fear,” she said.

The idea is to start conversations with friends and neighbours and teach them about diversity, she said. She has been wearing the hijab whenever she leaves her home.

She’s seen “a lot of looks” from people, but for the most part the conversations that arise when she’s asked about it are productive, she said.

A lot of misinformation is circulating about the hijab and Islam in general, she noted.

Rashid Ahmed, a young Muslim man who lives in Crowe’s building, agrees.

“If Muslim women is covering their face this is only their culture,” Ahmed said, adding he is supportive of Crowe wearing the hijab even though she is not a practicing Muslim.

“I was really excited by it, honestly. It’s a really good initiative to show solidarity with the Muslim people,” he said.

While there’s been no serious backlash or known acts of violence against Muslim people in Saskatoon, other parts of Canada have seen a spike in the wake of the Paris terror attacks.

A mosque in Peterborough, Ont. was set ablaze, and in Toronto a Muslim woman was allegedly attacked, targeted because she was wearing a head scarf.

Crowe said she hopes all her Muslim friends and neighbours feel welcome in Canada, but she wants to acknowledge — and combat — some of the bigotry toward Muslim people that does exist in Saskatoon.

Like most Muslim women, she is choosing to wear the head scarf — a freedom that should be respected in Canada, she said.

“My question is, why? What’s your reasoning behind raising your hands in violence?”

Direct Link: <http://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/woman-wears-headscarf-in-solidarity-with-muslim-women>

Will Canadians be as generous to First Nations as they are to Syrian refugees?

If we are talking the most marginalized and vulnerable, First Nations have to be included

By Chris Hall, [CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 03, 2015 5:00 AM ET Last Updated: Dec 03, 2015 8:41 AM ET



Governor General David Johnston enjoys indigenous children performing during the new government's swearing-in ceremony in Ottawa on Nov. 4. (Blair Gable/Reuters)

Canadians' response to the Syrian refugee crisis continues to be remarkable, an outpouring of generosity and compassion for the 25,000 people the Trudeau government's committed to resettle.

Ordinary citizens have dug into their own pockets, lined up to sponsor families and donated useful, necessary items to families who will be arriving to face their first Canadian winter.

Some examples are especially powerful.

Like the [Ontario business executive who is donating enough money](#) to cover the first year of living expenses for 50 families. And the [Montreal synagogue that raised \\$90,000](#) in a month to sponsor two families.

Governor General David Johnston called Canada's response to the refugee crisis a defining moment for the country earlier this week as he met with aid agencies and political, business and community leaders to discuss how to better coordinate the work of resettling 25,000 Syrians by February.

"This is a defining moment for Canada, a defining moment for all of us," he told the forum. "It's even more than that. It's an opportunity to reimagine how we take care of the most marginalized and vulnerable among us."

But does that sentiment extend beyond the imperatives of a current crisis?

Rethinking a historic relationship

Canadians are quick to donate to flood relief overseas, to victims of earthquakes and hurricanes.

But are they ready to reimagine how this country can respond to First Nations communities, many of them home to the most marginalized and vulnerable people inside Canada?

Cindy Blackstock isn't sure. She's the executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.

As she sees it: "Canadians' imagination for what they can accomplish internationally is much sharper than it is for what they can do at home."



Cindy Blackstock, executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, says "Canadians' imagination for what they can accomplish internationally is much sharper than it is for what they can do at home." (CBC)

There's no disputing the fact that more indigenous children are growing up in poverty in Canada than those in other groups. Or that more of them grow up without enough food, without the same access to health services and educational opportunity.

On its website, Canadian Feed the Children says one in 10 children grow up in poverty in Canada. For aboriginal children, the ratio is one in four.

Health Canada says that the health of aboriginal people, by nearly every measure, remains below that of the Canadian population as a whole.

Blackstock says numerous reports by the Auditor General, the Parliamentary Budget Officer and other government agencies have found that children on First Nations reserves receive fewer public services, including health, education and child welfare programs, than other communities.

Blaming First Nations for their problems

Yet the tendency, she says, is to blame First Nations for their own problems.

"It is a deeply embedded stereotype in Canada. No one is blaming the refugees for their circumstances. But when it comes to First Nations, the view is that it is our responsibility. That we are the ones who created all this."

Backing up her point: just this week the CBC suspended comments on stories about indigenous people and issues because they draw a disproportionate number of comments that violate the corporation's guidelines.

In their election platform, the Liberals committed to create a new, nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous peoples, one that would be based on recognition, rights, respect, co-operation and partnership.

That included implementing all the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

"I believe that reconciliation is not an aboriginal issue but a Canadian issue," Justin Trudeau said in a campaign speech this summer, when he set out his hope that "the quality of life gap between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people can be closed."

Can he and his government do it? In just a month in office, the Liberals have shown a willingness to confront the most difficult files.



Mjdi Mnaahe, his wife Wessam and their sons Tamim, 6, Saif, 4 and Mohammad, 1, (left to right) sit in their apartment Monday in Irbid, Jordan, waiting for approval to immigrate to Canada. (Paul Chiasson/Canadian Press)

These include climate change, where the government is committing itself to a plan to reduce emissions, as well as, of course, the promise to resettle 25,000 refugees that has galvanized ordinary Canadians across the country.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett told CBC Radio's *The House* last month that her goal is to have that renewed relationship with First Nations in place by the time Canada celebrates its 150th birthday in 2017.

"What we want is for the health, education and economic outcomes [for indigenous peoples] to be the same as Canadian averages."

But she conceded that Canadians have to be part of the solution.

Creating a strategic plan

The prime minister is to address indigenous leaders next week, when he's expected to announce his government's plan to hold a public inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

His office says he will set out a different narrative, emphasizing that aboriginal and non-aboriginal people have to walk forward together to address the disadvantages faced by indigenous people, stressing the importance of mutual respect and co-operation.

Blackstock says she hopes Trudeau will use the opportunity to set out a strategic plan for implementing the TRC recommendations, with targets and the money to reach them.

But she struggles with an answer when asked whether Canadians' response to the refugee crisis can translate into addressing the problems facing indigenous people.

"If we do this for Syrians, this outpouring of affection and generosity Canadians have shown, then let's step up to the plate at home. We need to embrace domestically what we so readily do internationally."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/first-nations-syrian-refugees-chris-hall-1.3348053>

Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement

Indigenous boys and men at high risk of being victims of violence

**There are ways to break the cycle, and 'our lives depend on it,' says
Lenard Monkman**

By Lenard Monkman, [for CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 29, 2015 5:00 AM ET Last Updated:
Nov 29, 2015 2:45 PM ET



'One of the things that Canadians fail to recognize is that boys and men in our community are also frequently at a high risk of being victims of violence, of going missing, of being killed,' says First Nations activist Lenard Monkman. (Daniel Crump)

I have three brothers and all three of them are currently incarcerated.

For as long as I can remember, my brothers have been actively involved in the criminal justice system.

They have all been in and out of jail since they were 12 years old, for petty charges as youth, and serious charges as adults.

Either this was the result of bad parenting, or it was the result of something more systemic.

I often wonder what it would be like had we grown up with just a little bit of financial security. I do not know what it is like to grow up with privilege, and I do not know what it is like to grow up with a healthy family.

Like many indigenous families, we deal with the inter-generational effects of residential schools, and even longer histories of colonialism.

Sometimes I think that some of my family members went through a more traumatic experience because they weren't able to fully recover from their childhoods.

The disconnect

Lately there has been growing awareness surrounding the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women. One of the things that Canadians fail to recognize is that boys and men in our community are also frequently at a high risk of being victims of violence, of going missing, of being killed.

Earlier this year, I had a chance to attend and be a helper in a sundance for the first time. (A sundance ceremony is a traditional celebration of life, where people gather to fast and pray). I ended up camping beside many youth who were in care.

Many of the kids said the same thing to me: a lot of them felt like there was a disconnect with their families and a disconnect from culture.

How do you place kids from poverty into upper class neighbourhoods and expect them to succeed?

The kids talked about what being in care was like, and how they felt like the system was failing them. The fact is that many of our youth are often killed by other youth.

It seems like society, and often our own people, have become desensitized to the fact that nobody pays attention when the young indigenous people in our country are killed or go missing. It almost seems normal that we talk about youth killing each other on reserves and that we see youth killing each other in urban environments, too.

How do we break the cycle?

When I look around the community and I think about what is causing a lot of the problems, one main issue is poverty. The second issue that people struggle with is being trapped within an urban environment.

And then there is the identity issue.

Growing up in Winnipeg's North End, there weren't too many positive indigenous role models in the community. There aren't enough to this day.

We must identify as many role models as possible within our community. Our people don't need "role models." They need "real models."

If we can find those in our community that have been through the same type of experiences and have succeeded, it makes trying to break out of negative cycles much more feasible.

I am a firm believer that each and every one of us has a gift. It has taken me 30 years to be able to figure out what my gift is. It has also taken me this long to figure out that I am able to help others.

We would have many more successful people in our community if we raised them to be proud of themselves.

I went to schools in the North End that taught anishinaabemowin (Ojibwa) in elementary. I also went to, and finished all four years of secondary school at Children Of The Earth High School. This school was very important in making me comfortable with being indigenous, as well as instilling a sense of pride in who I am.

'When we look at ourselves as resilient, we start looking out for each other.' - *Lenard Monkman*

I often ask people: "What does indigenous/native pride mean to you?" To me, it means knowing your history, knowing the resilience of your people, and knowing the beauty of your culture and traditions.

If people possessed these three characteristics, they would be able to walk with their heads held high — no longer ashamed to be indigenous.

When we look at ourselves as resilient, we start looking out for each other. When we view ourselves as relatives, we help to address the lateral violence in our communities.

In the era of reconciliation, we need Canada to continue to acknowledge the truth, and to be ready to support strong, healthy, indigenous people.

Our lives depend on it.

A version of this article first appeared in [Red Rising](#). It is republished with permission of the author.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/indigenous-boys-and-men-at-high-risk-of-being-victims-of-violence-1.3341222>

Nunavut plans to recruit more Inuit corrections workers

Inuit staff have greater understanding of experience of Inuit inmates, says counsellor

By Kieran Oudshoorn, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 30, 2015 5:00 AM CT Last Updated: Nov 30, 2015 8:05 AM CT

Nunavut's Department of Justice says it is committed to hiring more beneficiaries to work for corrections in the territory.

The commitment came as part of a response to a damning 2015 Auditor General's report [that slammed the territory's justice department](#) for failing to meet key responsibilities regarding the management of correctional facilities. The Department of Justice recently tabled its response to a standing committee's recommendations based on that report.

"Corrections undertook a new approach to hiring by focusing on the competency of an applicant," justice officials wrote in the document, explaining how they planned to hire more Inuit staff.

That new approach to hire more Inuit staff is part of concentrated effort by the department to remove systemic barriers to employment.

The department's success in hiring Inuit has been mixed, with beneficiaries making up 38 per cent of its staff. The women's jail in Iqaluit only employs two beneficiaries out of its 21 staff members, while the Rankin Inlet Healing Centre employs 39 Inuit for its 66 positions.

"You see us taking ownership of our own people," said Noel Kaludjak who works as a councillor at the centre in Rankin Inlet.

"The inmates communicate better in their own language. A few of them ... have a hard time expressing their needs in English."

Kaludjak said having staff who come from the same background and often the same community as the inmates have a greater understanding of lived experience of inmates and are able to incorporate that into their interactions with prisoners.

The advantages of having greater numbers of Inuit on staff can have long reaching effects, explains Peter Irniq, who runs rehabilitative programs for Inuit prisoners in the South that teach inmates traditional skills and Inuit history.

"Once they get that knowledge and information they feel really proud," Irniq said.

"They feel much more strength and they feel much more hopeful for their own future when they get back to their communities in Nunavut."

The justice department says they've received positive feedback to their efforts to hire more Inuit and say they plan to travel to Nunavut's smaller communities in the future with the aim of recruiting more employees.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-plans-to-recruit-more-inuit-corrections-workers-1.3342590>

Man pleads guilty to Winnipeg assaults

[Kathryn Blaze Baum](#)

WINNIPEG — The Globe and Mail

Published Monday, Nov. 30, 2015 4:50PM EST

Last updated Tuesday, Dec. 01, 2015 5:13AM EST

A 21-year-old man has pleaded guilty to last year's attack on a Winnipeg teen, admitting his role in the nearly fatal assault that turned the young woman into a voice for Canada's missing and murdered indigenous women.

In provincial court in the Manitoba capital on Monday, Justin Hudson, a member of the Poplar River First Nation, pleaded guilty to two counts of aggravated sexual assault in relation to the Nov. 8, 2014, attack on the young woman and a separate assault hours later on a second indigenous woman. He had been charged with attempted murder, aggravated sexual assault and sexual assault with a weapon.

The young woman's name is protected by a publication ban ordered by the court on Monday, as is the second victim's. The young woman and her family were not present for the plea, in part because of school and a medical appointment ahead of surgery on Friday related to the attack, her mother told The Globe in a brief message. The second victim, a 24-year-old, was there but declined to comment.

An 18-year-old co-accused, who cannot be named because he was a minor at the time of the offence, is in custody. No plea has been entered in his case. Prosecutor Jennifer Comack said in an e-mail that a direct indictment has been preferred, meaning that if the case goes to trial, there will be no preliminary inquiry. She also confirmed the Crown will seek an adult sentence if the 18-year-old is convicted.

One year after the gruesome attack, Monday's proceedings laid bare the fullest account yet of crimes that captured the nation's attention. It detailed how two men set out to celebrate a birthday by breaking into cars, and went on to rape and beat two women – one with a hammer, the other with a bat. The court heard Mr. Hudson and the teen left a trail of blood and other evidence along the way.

In addition to surveillance footage, DNA, witness accounts and Mr. Hudson's admissions, the court heard there was also a brazen act by his co-accused. The Crown said the teen took a picture of himself on the young woman's stolen iPod while wearing her black jacket; the photo was automatically uploaded to the young woman's iCloud account, which police later accessed.

The young woman, now 17, is today an advocate for a national inquiry into Canada's missing and murdered indigenous women – a probe the Liberal government has said it will launch by the summer. Her case also provoked a conversation about identifying victims of sexual assault.

Mr. Hudson, who appeared in court with chin-length brown hair and wearing a white T-shirt, seemed to make eye contact with the 24-year-old woman. He answered "yeah" when asked if he was pleading guilty to both counts. As he left the small courtroom, he nodded to his brother and aunt.

The court heard that he and his co-accused set out from the Hudson family home in Winnipeg around 7 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 7, 2014, to celebrate the teen's 17th birthday. The co-accused and Mr. Hudson, who was said to have consumed about five or six beers before going out, planned to break into cars using tools they had in a backpack, Crown attorney Debbie Buors said. However, they ended up finding the young woman in the

downtown area and lured her to a footpath under a bridge near the Assiniboine River around 12:30 a.m.

The teen and Mr. Hudson, who was said to have no recollection of some of the details but did not dispute them, hit and stomped on the young woman, who fought back until she passed out, the court heard. While she was unconscious, the two accused took turns sexually assaulting her. She came to, but was knocked out again, the Crown said.

The young woman ended up in the frigid river and crawled out after drifting about 100 metres. Mr. Hudson and the teen then assaulted her again, this time with a hammer, the court heard. The pair fled with her iPod, jacket and white runners. The young woman was found, half naked and nearly dead, by a passerby around 7 a.m. that day.

The Crown said Mr. Hudson and the teen met their second victim in the Portage Avenue area around 2:30 a.m. The woman was hit in the head twice with a bat and forced to remove her clothes. She was sexually assaulted in an alleyway by both men, sometimes simultaneously, the court heard. The Crown recounted that one of the men said, "I like this one, let's keep her for a while." Mr. Hudson and the teen eventually let the woman go.

In a bizarre twist, the woman encountered Mr. Hudson's mother and sister at a nearby convenience store and told them she had just been assaulted by two men. She left there and managed to get to her brother's home, where she called the police.

When the Hudson women got home, they confronted Mr. Hudson and the teen, who had arrived wearing white shoes splattered with blood, about what they had heard, the Crown said. The pair said they had "stomped a guy." The next morning, another argument ensued and Mr. Hudson threatened his mother, telling her to keep quiet: "Or I'll do to you what I did to that girl last night." Mr. Hudson's sister then called the police.

Mr. Hudson fled, but was arrested on Nov. 11. "After some time and after not being forthright, Hudson admitted his involvement" and also implicated the co-accused, the Crown said. Later that day, the teen was arrested.

A date has not been set for Mr. Hudson's sentencing.

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/man-pleads-guilty-in-attack-on-indigenous-teen-who-became-advocate/article27535118/>

Man facing second-degree murder charge following weekend death on Samson Cree Nation

[Paige Parsons, Edmonton Journal](#)

Published on: November 30, 2015 | Last Updated: November 30, 2015 2:49 PM MST



An RCMP cruiser Calgary Herald

A Maskwacis man has been charged in connection with the death of a 20-year-old woman on the Samson Cree Nation over the weekend.

Joshua Crier, 19, of Samson Cree Nation, faces second-degree murder charges after Kirsten Cutknife was found dead inside a home on the Samson Cree town site Saturday morning.

Crier was arrested late Saturday. He has also been charged with assault with a weapon against another 20-year-old woman, who received non-life threatening injuries. RCMP say the woman, Cutknife and Crier all knew each other.

An autopsy has been scheduled for Tuesday.

Crier is expected to make his first court appearance in Wetaskiwin on Dec. 17.

Direct Link: <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/crime/man-facing-second-degree-murder-charge-following-weekend-death-on-samson-cree-nation>

Brother hopes for 'truth, justice' at First Nations student deaths inquest

'I'm strong enough now to face this,' Reggie Bushie's brother says after testifying at inquest

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 29, 2015 7:00 PM ET Last Updated: Nov 29, 2015 7:00 PM ET



Ricki Strang from Poplar Hill First Nation holds a picture of his 2-year-old son, named Reggie, after Strang's brother who died in 2007 while attending high school in Thunder Bay, Ont. (Jody Porter/CBC)

Head bowed and sniffing, Ricki Strang testified at an inquest this past week about the night he went out drinking with his little brother, passed out, and woke up in the river where his brother's body was later found.

His story is part of an inquest into the deaths of seven First Nations students in Thunder Bay, Ont. Strang's brother Reggie Bushie, died in 2007. (The pair have the same parents, but use the last names of family members who raised them).

Strang and Bushie came to Thunder Bay for the first time in September 2007 to attend high school. School only goes to Grade 8 in their home of Poplar Hill, a fly-in First Nation about 550 km from Thunder Bay.

"I didn't know what to expect from the city, it was my first time out," said Strang, who was 17 in 2007. Bushie was 15.

Their mother, Rhoda (Bushie) King, testified earlier in the week that she still has many questions about what happened the night Bushie disappeared, but in the eight years since his death, she hasn't been able to ask Strang about it.

"I would tell her if she asked," Strang told CBC News after he testified. "But it's probably just tougher for her to ask me what I went through. Hopefully she'll come around and ask me. I just hope so now."



Thunder Bay police Sgt. Jim Glena led the investigation into Reggie Bushie's disappearance in 2007. He testified at the inquest on Friday. (Cathy Alex/CBC)

Testifying was difficult, he said, in part because he has never received any counselling or support for his grief.

"Sometimes I talk to myself, to make myself feel better," Strang said. "What I went through, what I am going through, it's tough."

Shortly after his brother was reported missing, Strang was questioned by police three times in a single day, without a support worker or any other adult present. Twice on that day, police took him to the river where he'd said he had last seen his brother.

"He went down to the river and put his hands in the water," Thunder Bay Police Sgt. Jim Glenna testified on Friday. "It's one of those moments that touched us all. It seemed like he was reaching for Reggie. We backed off and gave him some time."

On the witness stand, Strang told the story of the Friday night, Oct. 26, 2007, when he and his brother and a bunch of friends took the bus to the Intercity Mall and soon found someone willing to go to the liquor store for them.



Reggie Bushie was 15-years-old when he disappeared in Thunder Bay on Oct. 26, 2007. His body was found in the McIntyre River on Nov. 1, 2007. (CBC)

"Whoever chips in money, gets to join the party," Strang said of the transaction. A \$77.70 liquor store receipt from Oct. 26 entered into evidence at the inquest, shows the 'party' included a 40 oz. bottle of vodka, a 40 oz. bottle of whiskey and two 40 oz. bottles of Olde English malt liquor.

Strang said it was the first time he drank in the city. The only alcohol he consumed before that was homebrew that he said he made back in Poplar Hill, a so-called 'dry' reserve.

'We made mistakes'

"We made mistakes a long time ago, mistakes that are undoable," Strang told CBC News after his testimony.

The group of about half a dozen students walked along a path beside the McIntyre River to a wooded area where they drank quickly until the bottles were empty. Then they started walking back to the mall.

"We were trying to get some more," Strang said.

They met up with some other students under a bridge between the mall and the movie theatre and "stayed there for awhile to have some shots," he said.

Some of the other students who testified said that Bushie was staggering at that point, his arms around his big brother's neck to steady himself.

"They left us, me and my brother," Strang recalled, holding his head in his hands as he testified. "I was pretty drunk. I think we passed out under there."

Through the alcohol haze, Strang remembered seeing his brother lying on his back by the river. Then Strang woke up in the dark, on his back, "lying in the water."

When he was asked what happened next, Strang testified, after a long pause, "First I shouted my brother's name to see if he was around."

"I didn't see anyone, so I started walking home," he said.

The boarding home where the boys lived was almost two kilometres away. Other people who lived there remember Strang arriving home soaking wet, drunk and covered in dirt.

'The baffle'

Raymond Albert, an adult boarder who rented a room in the same house as the brothers, testified that the whole night was "the baffle" as he tried to alert the boarding home parent, who was at work, that one of the boys had missed curfew, and the other had come home drunk.

Concerned school officials came to the house and Albert muddled the brothers' names, telling them Reggie was at home, further confusing the situation.

At 12:45 a.m. on Sunday Oct. 28 a missing persons report was filed for Reggie Bushie with the Thunder Bay police.

Several searches ensued and eventually, Bushie's body was pulled from the McIntyre River on Nov. 1.

The presiding coroner at the inquest asked Sgt. Glena to advise the jury whether there was evidence to indicate whether Bushie's death was "accidental or non-accidental."

"There was nothing that we can conclude that Reggie caused his own death or someone else caused his death," Glena said. "There's no determination either way."

Despite the painful hours of testimony, Strang said he is hopeful the inquest will help bring "justice, the truth of what really happened."

"When I had to go through all that by myself, controlling myself and my emotions, when I lost my little brother... nobody was there to talk to me about how I felt," Strang said. "It makes me stronger, I guess. I'm strong enough now to face this."

Two years ago, Strang's son was born. He named him Reggie, after his brother.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/brother-hopes-for-truth-justice-at-first-nations-student-deaths-inquest-1.3340455>

Calgary police investigate dead cat found on sacred aboriginal landmark

By [Melissa Ramsay](#) Online Reporter Global News, December 1, 2015 8:17 am



A dead cat was found on a sacred aboriginal landmark at Nose Hill Park on Monday, Nov. 30, 2015.

CALGARY – Police have launched an investigation into the death of a cat found in a northwest park on Monday.

The feline's lifeless body was discovered on the east side of Nose Hill Park by a passerby at around 4 p.m.

It was found on a sacred aboriginal landmark which was created by the Blackfoot Nation this fall.

An animal cruelty investigator from Calgary Police Service is taking on the case, although at this point police are not calling the death suspicious.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2372287/calgary-police-investigate-dead-cat-found-in-nose-hill-park/>

Man facing murder charge in death of woman on Samson Cree town site



[Julia Parrish](#), Web Reporter, CTV Edmonton
Published Monday, November 30, 2015 4:27PM MST

RCMP south of Edmonton said a man has been charged in connection to the death of a woman, who was found inside a home on the Samson Cree town site.

Maskwacis RCMP said Joshua Crier, 19, of the Samson Cree Nation, was arrested Saturday, November 28. He's now facing a charge of second degree murder.

On Saturday, RCMP were called to the home at about 10 a.m. – inside, officers found a woman with “obvious signs of trauma”.

The deceased woman has been identified as Kristen Cutknife, 20.

Police also said Crier had been charged with assault with a weapon. That charge stems from injuries another individual, identified as Zoe Littlechild, 20, suffered.

Littlechild did not suffer life-threatening injuries in the incident.

Police said all three knew each other.

Crier has been remanded in custody; he's scheduled to appear in a Wetaskiwin courtroom December 17.

An autopsy has been tentatively scheduled for December 2.

Direct Link: <http://edmonton.ctvnews.ca/man-facing-murder-charge-in-death-of-woman-on-samson-cree-town-site-1.2680724>

SQ renews call for information about missing aboriginal women



CTV Montreal

Published Thursday, December 3, 2015 7:31AM EST

Last Updated Friday, December 4, 2015 7:29AM EST

The Sureté du Quebec is launching a new appeal for information about two missing aboriginal women.

Shannon Alexander and Maisy Odjick were 17 and 16 when they were last seen on Sept. 5, 2008 in Maniwaki. They both lived in the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation Territory

The pair left their wallets behind at Shannon's father's house, which led police to believe they had been abducted.



Maisy Odjick

Shannon Mary Mathewson-Alexander

The Sureté du Quebec has age-progressed sketches of Maisy Odjick and Shannon Alexander



A sign near Maniwaki showing the pictures of Maisy Odjick and Shannon Alexander.



Laurie Odjick, mother of Maisy Odjick, appears on CTV's Power Play on May 24, 2011

Friends and family spent months looking for the pair and even went street by street in Ottawa, 150 km to the south.

The English-speaking women would both be 24 years old now.

When they were last seen Shannon was 1.75 m and 66 kg (5'9", 146 lb) with brown hair and eyes, and a scar on her left knee.

Maisy was 1.75 m and 54 kg (5'10, 120 lb) with black hair and brown eyes, and her left nostril and lower lip were pierced.

Anyone with information about them is asked to call the SQ at 1-800-659-4264.

Direct Link: <http://montreal.ctvnews.ca/sq-renews-call-for-information-about-missing-aboriginal-women-1.2684716>

Man accused of killing Cree woman suffering from 'demonic possession' in days leading up to alleged confession

[National News](#) | December 2, 2015 by [Kenneth Jackson](#)



(Jennifer Stewart, 36, in an undated photo.)

Kenneth Jackson

APTN National News

Every day they sit in the same spot just a few strides from the man accused of killing their loved one confined to the prisoner's box at the Ottawa courthouse standing trial for first-degree murder.

The victim's family can be seen earnestly following the motions as the jury trial moves along.

They've heard how she fought to save herself from an axe-wielding attacker with her wrists nearly severed maybe as she tried to stop the blows in the pitch black night of Aug. 20, 2010.

Jennifer Stewart was a 36-year-old Cree mother who died on a gravel parking lot in the inner-city community of Vanier in the city's east end.

Those that loved her called her Jenny.

She is on the long list of murdered Indigenous women over the last 30 years in Canada – nearly 1,200 names join her.

And like some on that list, she was caught in the wide swath of addictions.

At the time of her death she weighed 80 pounds.

Stewart's murder went unsolved for more than two years with no suspects. It was a case that was unlikely to be solved unless someone came forward.

Then on Feb. 25, 2013, someone did.

It was a young man already locked up in the local jail in Ottawa – Adrian Daou, now 24.

Suicidal and under 24-hour watch in segregation, Daou told a jail guard he wanted to confess to a murder.

That jailer called police who came the next day to get his confession on tape.

The Crown has presented its case. They allege Daou killed Stewart because he was angry at his life and thought maybe if he did something crazy, like murder someone, he'd become a famous rapper.

But there are issues with the case. For one there is no murder weapon. The axe he allegedly used was thrown away. First, Daou said he discarded it, then he said his dad did it.

The Ottawa police lead detective has testified he only left a voicemail with the dad to confirm whether the potential murder weapon was indeed gone and did nothing more to follow up.

Daou's confession is riddled with incorrect information about the murder. He allegedly said Stewart never put up a fight to save herself – something a pathologist testified she did in vain.

He also said when he lured her to the parking lot at 120 Alice St. he surprised her, hitting her in the chest and back, but according to the autopsy, she had no wounds there. There were 28 wounds in total – the five to her head is what killed her. There were wounds on a leg, thigh and her pelvis. The pathologist testified there was a struggle as Stewart had a fractured arm from being grabbed and “twisted.”

Daou told police Stewart kept her hands to her side almost as though she wanted to die.

Police were able to track down a receipt from the Canadian Tire store Daou said he bought the axe, along with a painter's mask and goggles. But there is no video of him purchasing the items and the cashier who sold them wasn't called to the stand. Not to mention, the receipt is dated weeks before he said he bought it.

Daou also confessed to another murder, the name of the victim is under a publication ban, but police quickly discounted that confession because they had already arrested another man for that crime.

There are also questions about why Daou confessed. When he met with two Ottawa police detectives, he told them he needed to get out of the jail where they had him locked in segregation under suicide watch. He told them he wanted out and was willing to confess to a murder if they'd take him straight to a federal prison.

Throughout the Crown's case the jury has heard him speak of hearing voices, and being mentally ill.

But on Wednesday, when the Daou's defence team, funded by Legal Aid, took its turn to present its case, they told the jury they would have to consider if Daou is criminally responsible based on his mental state at the time. It was the first time the jury had heard this.

It was also the first time they heard that Daou, just days prior to allegedly confessing, had tried to get jail doctors to free him – even if that meant a trip to the hospital.

“He wanted me to use my influence to get him out of jail,” testified Dr. Shirley Brathwaite, a psychiatrist who attends to prisoners in the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre where Daou was being held.

Brathwaite said Daou was threatening to cut his finger and bite his arm. She found it inappropriate that he was laughing throughout the short encounter on Feb. 22, just a few days before his alleged confession to police.

Brathwaite was asked to see Daou by Dr. Ian Shields, the jail psychologist, who also testified he met with Daou Feb. 20 in his office for an assessment.

He noticed something was off about Daou and asked him if he was hearing voices, which Daou denied.

But Daou did say he was possessed by demons and talked about cutting one of his fingers to free himself from the evil spirit.

“By cutting off one of his fingers he wouldn’t be possessed anymore,” said Shields, describing Daou’s logic at the time.

Shields would continue to meet with Daou, including several times after his alleged confession. In those meetings he described to the court that Daou appeared calmer and staring off into space.

The trial continues Monday when the defence calls its last remaining scheduled witness – the expert to testify to his mental state.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/12/02/man-accused-of-killing-cree-woman-suffering-from-demonic-possession-in-days-leading-up-to-alleged-confession/>

Aboriginal Education & Youth

U of S students call for mandatory indigenous content

By [Ryan Kessler](#) Reporter Global News, November 26, 2015 6:40 pm



Gabe Senecal is one of the people who say an indigenous course requirement at the University of Saskatchewan would bring together indigenous and non-indigenous people.

SASKATOON – Less than a week after The University of Winnipeg approved a plan to make indigenous content a mandatory part of its curriculum, the University of Saskatchewan Student’s Council is asking for the same. The U of S Students’ Council (USC) has unanimously passed a motion calling for the course requirement.

Members are asking for a committee to be struck by May 2016 to look into the idea. The group would include students, faculty and indigenous leaders.

“It’s just a matter of, I suppose, pushing the university to put the money where their mouth is and commit to implementing indigenous content into every single degree at the University of Saskatchewan,” said Gabe Senecal, vice-president of academic affairs with the USC.

The requirement would be an effort of reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous people, Senecal said.

“We really want the university to go through every single college and really have a conversation within the college as to how it can be implemented into every degree,” he added.

The mandatory course in Winnipeg will be grandfathered in and Senecal said that would likely be the case if the U of S adopts a similar requirement.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2364628/u-of-s-students-call-for-mandatory-indigenous-content/>

Mikisew Cree First Nation breaks from Northland school district

By [Garrett Barry](#), Today staff

Thursday, November 26, 2015 8:47:31 MST PM



Athabasca Delta Community School in Fort Chipewyan. Curtis Walty/Northland School District

The Mikisew Cree First Nation announced plans to build an independent school in Fort Chipewyan on Thursday, breaking away from the Northland School District.

MCFN Chief Steve Courtoreille said the nation intends to create a "Band Operated School" which they will own and run. The school will be built on their reserve next to Fort Chipewyan, and is expected to open in September 2018.

Students from the MCFN currently attend the Athabasca Delta Community School, which runs from Kindergarten to Grade 12. According to Courtoreille the decision to establish an independent school was fuelled by frustration over the quality of education in the school and inaction on behalf of the district to improve things.

"We've been studied to death," he said on Friday afternoon. "Northland is still failing us today."

"We have an eight-year-old boy that's in Grade 3 — He's probably in class today — who does not know to read or write," Courtoreille added. "Already that child is going to fail."

The MCFN school would be just the second independently operated school among the Athabasca Tribal Council members. The Chipewyan Prairie First Nation also runs a high school.

The Athabasca Delta Community School currently houses 226 students. It's one of 24 schools that the Northland district operates across Northern Alberta.

March's Auditor General report — which found that one third of students in the sprawling Northland School District were "chronically absent" — claimed that buses in Fort Chipewyan to the school ran just 30% of the time in the 2013-14 school year.

Reports submitted to Northland's board say that in June, 39% of students at the Athabasca Delta Community School attended school less than half the time. That was tied for the worst record of any school in the district.

Courtoreille also alleged that the school was in disrepair, claiming the school board never properly fixed the school after it was shut down in 2010 due to mold.

Donna Barrett, Northland's superintendent, agreed that the school needed work, but denied that there were any remaining mold issues, saying that the school has been constantly monitored.

She agreed the school faced challenges, but said the district was working with the community to address them, and that it wasn't failing its job.

"I think we've been working together to address the challenges in Fort Chipewyan," she said. "To improve attendance, and to provide programming, to attract and retain teachers in the community... Are there challenges? Absolutely."

"And we're working with the community to make progress," she added. "And we've been working with Chief and Council to address issues."

The Northland district has been beset by problems, and has been chronically underperforming in testing scores and attendance. Five years ago, the Government of Alberta dissolved the district's board and installed an official trustee.

"The (Northland) division's chronic problems include high teacher and staff absences and turnover; deteriorating infrastructure; poor facilities...And intergenerational effects of residential schools including poverty, addictions, mental health and family trauma," the Auditor General wrote in March. "These challenges are complicated by the division's vast size and remoteness."

Barrett said the district was aware of the MCFNs desire, and was working with the community leadership to help support a transition.

The future of the Athabasca Delta school is still to be decided, she said. The MCFN says their new school will be open to any student who currently attends the Athabasca school today.

Courtoreille explained that the new school should offer full Cree immersion for students, and will give the MCFN full control to teach their students about Cree history.

"We all don't know the whole oral history of our first nation families...but imagine we put this into the curriculum," he said. "This is an opportunity for our kids to fully understand the treaties."

Direct Link: <http://www.fortmcmurraytoday.com/2015/11/26/mikisew-cree-breaks-from-northland-school-district>

Billy-Ray Belcourt Is Canada's First-Ever First Nations Rhodes Scholar

The Huffington Post Canada | By [Mohamed Omar](#)

Posted: 11/28/2015 3:06 pm EST Updated: 11/28/2015 4:59 pm EST

He has a perfect 4.0 GPA. He's the president of the aboriginal students association at the University of Alberta. He sits on committees and somehow [finds time](#) to write poetry.

And now [Billy-Ray Belcourt](#) isn't just one of 11 Canadians who've been [selected as Rhodes scholars](#), he's also the country's first-ever First Nations student to receive the scholarship, widely regarded to be the world's most academically prestigious.

Belcourt, a 21-year-old member of the Driftpile Cree Nation, told CTV's Canada AM show that he was "overcome with emotion" upon hearing he had been chosen as one of 89 international Rhodes scholars at Oxford University. The comparative literature student said he intends to pursue a master's degree in medical anthropology and women's studies.

The post-graduate awards, [which began in 1903](#), are given to "young women and men of outstanding intellect, character, leadership, and commitment to service," according to its website. It covers all tuition fees and includes a personal stipend, as well as an economy-class ticket to Oxford and a flight back to the scholar's home country.

The first person Belcourt called was his grandmother, who he says assumed something was wrong due to his tears-of-happiness tone on the phone.

Belcourt was raised by his grandparents, according to the CBC. He told the broadcaster [his family](#) "instilled in me the drive to succeed as an indigenous person."

At Oxford, Belcourt [plans to focus](#) on the effects of colonialism on indigenous people's health. He told the University of Alberta his work with the Native Youth Sexual Health Network helped influence his plan to study medical anthropology.

"I've been able to witness first-hand the health disparities that are troubling First Nations reserves, such as the lack of information around culturally safe sexual health, education and practices for Indigenous peoples," he said.

Aboriginals in Canada "continue to be over-represented in the HIV epidemic," according to Health Canada. The department says that although infections among the total

population [have gone down](#), "it appears that HIV rates have been steadily increasing in First Nations and Inuit populations."

A variety of factors have led to increased vulnerability for aboriginal people, such as poverty, substance use and limited access to health services.

Upon returning to Canada, Belcourt said he wants to help work on culturally specific HIV prevention models and improve the health of indigenous people.

In his application for the scholarship, Belcourt said he argued "that this wasn't just about me — it was for my community and for all Indigenous people in Canada to be able to see someone like them winning something like this."

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/11/28/billy-ray-belcourt-rhodes-scholar_n_8672386.html

Education about Aboriginal issues focus at annual peace meal



Kim Wheatley of the Anishinaabe (Ojibway) nation speaks to the gathered in a talk entitled "Walking in our Moccasins, Understanding First Nations Ways of Knowing" during the annual Peace Meal presented by Mosaic Interfaith group.

SIDEBAR

By the numbers:

- 6,750 – statements received by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;
- 1,355 – hours of recording collected by the commission over a six-year period;
- 150,000 – Aboriginal children were placed in residential schools;

- 6,000 – residential school deaths, with the majority happening in the early years. Some of the causes include tuberculosis and influenza, which spread rapidly through neglect, abuse, lack of food, isolation and poorly constructed buildings;
- 139 – residential schools across the country between 1983 and 1996, with the last one to close in 1996;
- 60 per cent – of residential schools were operated by the Catholic Church

Thornhill Liberal

By [Amanda Persico](#)

Nov 30, 2015

For the Aboriginal community, reconciliation starts with education.

And that's the focus behind this year's annual peace meal hosted by the Mosaic Interfaith group in Thornhill.

Yesterday, Kim Wheatley, an Anishinaabe band member of the Shawanaga First Nation, spoke at the annual peace meal.

Wheatley talked about Aboriginal struggles, which recently came to light through the Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future report published earlier this year by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission chaired by Justice Murray Sinclair.

The report, which involved about six years of interviewing and listening to survivor stories, concluded with 94 recommendations and changes to be made across the country.

The recently released report is part of volume of six reports.

The recommendations are more about action than words, with basic common sense and equality at the helm, she added.

"When I first heard of it, I said, 'Wow, that's a lot'. Now, I say 'That's not enough'," Wheatley said. "This has changed the face of Canada. It's not a blame and shame."

Instead, the report is the beginning of a reconciliation and relationship building.

The report wasn't written for Aboriginal people. It was written for all Canadians, said Natalie Doucet, a pastoral associate at St. Luke's Parish in Markham.

"This is not an Aboriginal problem," she said. "This is a Canadian problem. We have to take responsibility and that begins with awareness."

And that was the reason for Sunday's event, she continued, to bring awareness to all the different local faith communities.

The report looked at the residential school system, where more than 150,000 Aboriginal children were taken from their families and put in schools designed to assimilate them and wipe out their culture.

More than 6,000 Aboriginal students died in the residential school system.

While the report touches on the residential schools, there is more to the complex issue Wheatley said.

There are basic rights, such as voting, education and access to running water that were not extended to Aboriginal peoples.

"We are still wards of the crown," she said. "We didn't get the vote until 1960. We we're not considered human beings before then. I think about my parents and grandparents who didn't have the same freedoms in our own home."

Wheatley, a grandmother of two, works as a cultural ambassador and travels throughout the country sharing her cultural knowledge.

"You can turn on the tap and have drinking water for days," said Wheatley. "I leave the tap on and the reservoir goes empty. Then I have to buy my water. My water isn't endless."

She also touched on recent media reports of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, noting these incidences are not given the same weight as other cases.

"In Canada, we are the lowest of the low," she said. "A little girl goes missing in a corn field and how many police officers are searching? You don't hear about the indigenous girl who was wrapped in plastic and thrown in the river."

"There isn't the same level of response."

And the list doesn't end there.

During the White Paper era in the 1970s, Aboriginals were subject to the local Indian agent who controlled access to the reserves and determined who could leave and how much money each family could receive.

That's not to mention the fact many reserves did not have electricity or even streetlights.

"Life was very different for us," she said. "There are many layers and it will take a long time to navigate the truth. Today, it's amazing. I get to have a voice in a manner I didn't have 30 years ago. This right to choose is relatively new."

Her message is each person can do something to help build that relationship.

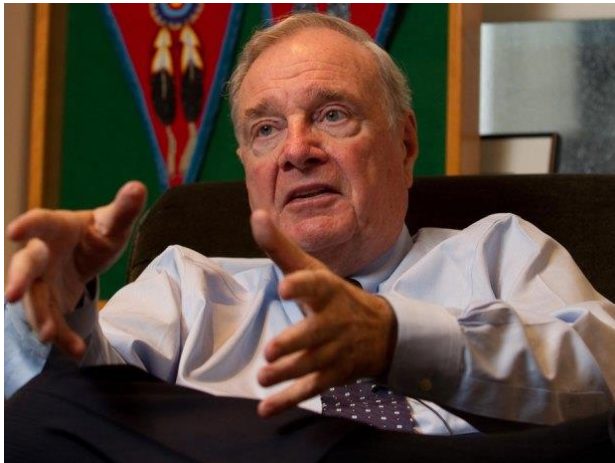
“Pick one recommendation and go with it,” she told the assembly. “Make it a reality. This is not just another report sitting on a shelf.”

For more information or to read the full report, visit trc.ca

Direct Link: <http://www.yorkregion.com/community-story/6141294-education-about-aboriginal-issues-focus-at-annual-peace-meal/>

Startup Canada recognizes Paul Martin for his win-win solution to end poverty

[Rick Spence](#) | November 30, 2015 11:20 AM ET



Startup Canada, a grassroots business organization started by idealistic millennials, has honoured Paul Martin for his work helping Aborigines build businesses.

Paul Martin, Jr. was in his teens when he hitch-hiked to the Northwest Territories and became a deckhand on a tug hauling barges down the Mackenzie River. “It was a different era,” says the 77-year-old former prime minister. “You could get a summer job that way, because people my age were in short supply.”

Martin’s memory of that summer is the evenings, when the boats pulled up and the deckhands talked into the night. Most were aboriginals. He remembers them as friendly, intelligent and hard-working, but there was something different about them. “These were all smart young people who could have done anything, but something had happened to them. They didn’t have the same degree of hope that other young people had.”

Decades later, Martin, along with most Canadians, learned of the “residential schools” that tried to expunge aboriginal youths’ connections to their land, language and culture. “Indigenous history ... is a litany of dispossession, of people trapped in a vicious cycle of

deepening poverty and environmental degradation imposed by others — and that cycle has to be broken,” he told a Calgary forum of social entrepreneurs.

In his three years as prime minister, Martin tried to do just that. In November 2005, he introduced the \$5-billion Kelowna Accord, which he claimed would “eliminate the gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians in the areas of health, education, housing and economic opportunity.” But that same month his minority government fell. Stephen Harper’s conservative government never endorsed the accord.

When Martin left office he started working on an entrepreneurial solution. Since then, the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative (MAEI) has developed Canada’s — and likely the world’s — first entrepreneurship curriculum written by and for aboriginal entrepreneurs. The MAEI has also piloted a literacy program that has raised the reading and writing levels of native children to Canada-wide levels in just two years.

Prompted by aboriginal entrepreneurs’ complaints about the difficulty of raising investment capital, Martin set up Capital for Aboriginal Prosperity and Entrepreneurship (CAPE) Fund, which has raised \$50 million to invest in promising aboriginal-run businesses across Canada.

This week, Martin is being recognized by Startup Canada, a grassroots business organization started by idealistic millennials, as the national winner of its first lifetime achievement award. “As a champion of indigenous social enterprise, Paul Martin’s impact will carry on for generations,” said Victoria Lennox, co-founder and CEO of Startup Canada.

It’s an ironic cap to a peripatetic career. After earning a law degree, Martin went into business mainly to avoid being a lawyer. He felt the call to serve Canada politically, as his father Paul Sr. had when he pushed through public health care in the 1960s.

Ironically, Paul Jr.’s political career peaked early when, as finance minister in the 1990s, he tamed the federal deficit. As Prime Minister, Martin may be best remembered for holding the Liberal party together against the newly united Conservatives and rising NDP leader Jack Layton, all while accepting accountability for a sponsorship scandal that occurred on Jean Chretien’s watch.

But Martin’s status as an entrepreneurial icon doesn’t spring from nowhere. In 1981, as president of Canada Steamship Lines, he took the biggest gamble of his life. With a partner, Martin bought CSL from its owner, Montreal-based Power Corp., for a reported \$189 million — Canada’s largest management buyout at the time.

Martin saw the opportunity to expand CSL’s fleet of self-unloaders — freighters with on-board cranes that can drop dry-bulk cargos anywhere, with no need for extensive port facilities. Martin believed this made-in-Canada technology could revolutionize transportation around the globe. Today, under the control of his sons Paul, James and David, CSL manages fleets of self-unloaders in Europe, Africa, South America and

Australia. Asked if he considers CSL a good example of an entrepreneurial Canadian technology that has been commercialized globally, he says, "That's exactly right."

Not to realize the potential of this huge young population would be short-sighted as well as immoral

As concerned as he is with correcting the injustices done to Canada's native people, Martin says there's another bottom line. Indigenous people represent Canada's fastest-growing demographic, he says. As Canada's population ages, aboriginals represent a valuable source of workers with new ideas. "Not to realize the potential of this huge young population," he says, would be short-sighted as well as immoral.

Martin sees the thriving aboriginal trade before Columbus as proof that Canada's indigenous people have strong entrepreneurial roots. Now he points to companies such as Manitobah Mukluks (international purveyors of traditional native footwear) and B.C.-based Coastal Shellfish as examples of aboriginal companies that combine unique native worldviews with sophisticated marketing.

Companies such as these now tap capital from CAPE. Martin says he launched the fund by asking Canada's banks and prominent corporations (such as Teck, Barrick, Sun Life and SNC Lavalin) to contribute "social capital" to fund aboriginal business. "I laid it out," Martin says. "The combination of social return and the economic return means this will be one of the best investments you'll ever make."

MAEI will continue to run its successful aboriginal entrepreneurship program, which is now in 47 schools across the country. But Martin admits he needs Ottawa's financial support to expand its literacy program across Canada. The payoff: improved literacy will mean a more engaged student body, a more capable workforce, and more confident entrepreneurs. Martin is hopeful the new government will be sympathetic to his cause, but as a social entrepreneur, he's not expecting a handout. "It's up to us," he says, "to prove our case."

Rick Spence is a writer, consultant and speaker specializing in entrepreneurship.

Direct Link: <http://business.financialpost.com/entrepreneur/startup-canada-recognizes-paul-martin-for-his-win-win-solution-to-end-poverty>

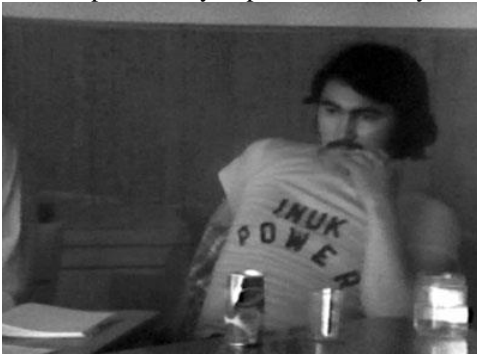
Borrowing a slogan from the past, Nunavik youth group promotes "Inuk Power"

"It's a great time to be involved"

SARAH ROGERS, December 02, 2015 - 7:00 am



Nunavik youth forum president Alicia Aragutak with vice-president Louisa Yeates wearing Inuk Power t-shirts, a phrase they hope will connect youth in the region. (PHOTO BY SARAH ROGERS)



This old footage shows Jimmy Johanes sitting in discussions with Nunavik and Quebec leaders in the early 1970s, ahead of the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. (IMAGE COURTESY OF MAKIVIK CORP)

KUUIJUAQ — Kativik Regional Government councillors received a very different report from Nunavik's youth leadership last week than they've seen in the recent past.

Just last August, the [Nunavik Youth Forum](#) replaced the now-defunct Saputiit Youth Association.

And the forum's leadership says the new group is now empowered and motivated to get the region's youth organization back on track, to address mental health, promote Inuit values, and create opportunity for Inuit youth.

"The future is really beautiful and the possibilities are endless," the youth forum's new vice president, Louisa Yeates, told KRG councillors during regional council meetings in Kuujuaq last week. "So it's a great time to be involved."

But there's work to do before the group can putting its ideas into motion.

The youth forum is still waiting for new office space at Makivik Corp.'s building in Kuujuaq.

To re-establish the roughly \$300,000 in funding it's supposed to received from the Quebec government, the group has re-launched under Makivik.

That funding was withheld from Saputiit for many years, while the group struggled to fix financial mismanagement problems. The new youth forum estimates the group lost more than \$2 million funding that it will never be able to recoup.

"We definitely feel the after effects," forum president Alicia Aragutak said.

"There's been nothing happening for the last five years," she said. "It makes us feel good to start something, but the pressure is there."

While speaking to *Nunatsiaq News*, Aragutak and Yeates wore white T-shirts with the phrase Inuk Power printed across the front.

The T-shirt is a replica of one first spotted on Jimmy Johannes in the early 1970s, when he sat at the negotiation table for the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

The youth group has re-claimed the T-shirt and the phrase, as a sign that they're picking up the torch once carried by an older generation of Nunavik leaders.

"They wanted us to own the responsibility of leading the region," Yeates said.

And that's their plan.

In many ways, the group is starting from scratch, although Aragutak, 24, said she's received strong support from throughout the region.

In the coming months, the youth forum will host consultations to develop an Inuit youth policy, the first of its kind in Quebec.

While the provincial government's youth body, the Secrétariat à la jeunesse, works to renew the provincial-wide policy, the organization acknowledged that Inuit youth have different needs and provided funding for Nunavik to create its own youth policy.

"Their realities are not the same as ours in the North," Aragutak said.

The realities of life in Nunavik have become a major source of motivation for both of the young leaders, however.

Yeates and Aragutak say they experienced an "ah-ha" moment while taking a workshop on decolonization, led by Kuujjuaq educator Mary Joanne Kauki, who they say taught them how to unpack their own history as a colonized people.

"I felt empowered as an Inuk woman," Aragutak said. "And proud of my identity."

“We’re a great, resilient people who can got through anything without losing our values.”

It’s an attitude she wants to pass on to other young Nunavimmiut, Aragutak said.

The youth forum is looking for help finding a new name. Nunavimmiut of all ages are invited to submit a one word description, in Inuktitut, by Dec. 11 to louisayeates@gmail.com.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavik_youth_group_promotes_inuk_power/

First Nations get more say in child welfare under proposed Manitoba law

Parents would maintain guardianship of children in customary care arrangements

[CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 02, 2015 12:33 PM CT Last Updated: Dec 02, 2015 3:11 PM CT



Proposed changes to the Child and Family Services Act would see Manitoba hand more responsibility to indigenous communities, Family Services Minister Kerri Irvin-Ross said at an announcement at Thunderbird House in Winnipeg on Wednesday. (Meagan Fiddler/CBC)



The Manitoba government wants more traditional methods of care put in place for indigenous foster children.

Proposed changes to the Child and Family Services Act would also see the province hand off more responsibility to indigenous communities, allowing troubled children to be placed with other relatives or families in the same community.

The proposed legislation would underscore the importance of indigenous communities determining and carrying out care of their children, according to traditional customs, Family Services Minister Kerri Irvin-Ross said, adding the province will consult with indigenous communities to determine what customary care would look like for each of them.

Working with CFS agencies, the individual communities would be directly involved in developing care plans, supports and services. Parents would also maintain guardianship of their children in a customary care arrangement.

Under the proposed legislation:

- There would be an increased focus on prevention and supporting families to prevent children from coming into the care of CFS.
- Indigenous communities, in collaboration with CFS agencies, would be directly involved in developing care plans, in arranging and planning supports and services for children and families.
- Parents would maintain guardianship of their children in customary care arrangements.
- There would be an understanding that family healing takes time.
- There would be collaborative planning for healing, family reunification and permanency opportunities for CFS-involved families.

The plan was first promised in last month's throne speech, and is in response to inquiry recommendations that have criticized the high number of aboriginal children in foster care.

Irvin-Ross also said there will be an increased focus on helping families before their children become at risk of apprehension.

"These proposed legislative changes would support an increased number of culturally appropriate caregivers in Manitoba and may reduce the number of indigenous children in care," she said.

"We have heard from indigenous leadership that children are the collective responsibility of the community and look forward to working with them to develop customary care models that reflect these values."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-first-nations-child-welfare-1.3347096>

Aboriginal Health

Alberta says it owes 'no duty' to quadriplegic Cree man suing for alleged abuse in hospital

Gerald Francis's lawyer says her client still faces discrimination in health system

By Marion Warnica, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 26, 2015 4:56 PM MT Last Updated: Nov 26, 2015 7:17 PM MT



Gerald Francis listens to music with his common-law partner, Florence Youngchief. Francis is suing the Alberta government over alleged abuse in the hospital system. (CBC)

The province of Alberta has filed a statement of defence in a multimillion-dollar lawsuit accusing the health minister, several doctors and Alberta Health Services of abuse and discrimination.

Gerald Francis, a 59-year-old Cree man and registered member of the Treaty 6 signatory Louis Bull Cree Nation, filed an amended version of his lawsuit on Nov. 5. Francis, a quadriplegic, is a patient at the University of Alberta Hospital waiting for a long-term care placement.

After a fall down the stairs two years ago, Francis lost all feeling in his arms and legs, and could only shrug his shoulders and turn his head.

Francis went to the hospital in Wetaskiwin, Alta., in January 2014, where he used a wheelchair that didn't properly fit him for four months. As a result, he developed eight deeply infected pressure wounds that were called life-threatening by an Edmonton doctor who ordered emergency surgery.

The provincial government's Protection for Persons in Care office then investigated Francis's case. In a report obtained by CBC News, the investigator [documented evidence of abuse](#), defined as "an act or omission that results in failing to provide adequate nutrition, adequate medical attention, or another necessity of life without a valid consent, resulting in serious bodily harm."

That investigator also recommended that Francis and his common-law wife, Florence Youngchief, who both speak Cree as a first language, receive additional assistance by applying for federal funding for the two specialized wheelchairs he needs. As a Treaty 6 member, he is unable to apply for provincial funding.

Lacks proper wheelchair

After 27 months in hospital, Francis had not received a properly fitting wheelchair.

A lawyer representing the province, Health Minister Sarah Hoffman and the director of the Protection for Persons in Care filed a statement of defence Wednesday.

"At all material times, the Crown, through the Ministry of Health, provided global funding to the responsible regional health authority, Alberta Health Services (AHS), who in turn delivers health services to the residents of Alberta," the statement reads.

The statement said that while the Health Ministry provides global funding to the regional health authority and AHS, it noted AHS is an incorporated legal entity, distinct from the ministry.

"The Crown denies that it owed any duty to the plaintiff, or any of them, either statutory or otherwise, and further denies that it breached any duty owed to the plaintiff, or any of them, as alleged or at all," the statement reads.

Representatives for AHS and the Health Ministry have both said they cannot give interviews or issue a statement to CBC about the lawsuit due to privacy and legal concerns.

Francis's lawyer Miranda Moore replied to the statement of defence in a letter, which was forwarded to the CBC.

"Mr. Francis wishes to convey he is bewildered that Alberta would take such an indifferent position after being fully made aware of his personal, mental, emotional, psychological and physical suffering experienced within the Alberta health-care system, as a vulnerable quadriplegic and indigenous (Cree) person," Moore wrote.

She added her client was surprised to read the response after Premier Rachel Notley's campaign promise that Alberta will become the first province to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Treaty obligation cited

The UN General Assembly adopted that declaration in 2007, which recognizes indigenous peoples' basic human rights and rights to self-determination, language, equality and land, among other rights. But Canada, which had been involved in drafting the declaration, opposed it along with the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

Canada did endorse the declaration in 2010, but called it an "aspirational document" that would not be legally binding.

Now, Canada's new Liberal government has promised [it will implement the declaration](#), and Notley has asked each provincial ministry to review its policies and make sure they adhere.

Meanwhile, Francis and his common-law spouse have received bills for his care at the University of Alberta Hospital. CBC News has obtained copies of some of these invoices. One of those bills claims Francis owes \$4,275 for 86 days in the hospital.

Francis is a quadriplegic and cannot work. His lawyer claims that even if the United Nations declaration is not fully implemented yet, the Alberta government does have a responsibility to provide him with equal care and treatment in the health system.

Referring to the bills, Moore wrote in a letter to the University of Alberta that Canada entered Treaty 6, which is unique among all other numbered treaties in Canada.

"Indigenous peoples that are beneficiaries of Treaty 6 thus take the position Canada accepted fiduciary and trust duties to ensure health-care services were equally provided to them, in exchange for 'sharing' their ancestral territories."

None of the allegations in either the statement of claim or statement of defence has been proven in court.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/gerald-francis-quadruplegic-lawsuit-alberta-health-care-1.3338906>

Ontario First Nation to grow medical marijuana

Facility could provide up to 100 jobs for the Wahgoshig First Nation

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 27, 2015 4:52 PM ET Last Updated: Nov 30, 2015 8:01 AM ET



An Ontario First Nation is partnering with DelShen Therapeutics to become a federally licensed producer of medical marijuana. (THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP, Seth Perlman)

A tiny northern Ontario First Nation has announced plans to get into the medical marijuana business.

The Wahgoshig First Nation, near Kirkland Lake, is partnering with an Ontario company called DelShen Therapeutics to convert a former forestry operation into a facility that will grow "pharmaceutical grade" pot.

The medical marijuana grown will be a strain developed in the Netherlands, specifically for medical purposes.

The entire operation is expected to cost \$18-million. In a press release, chief David Babin said the First Nation has chipped in \$2-million of that cost.

"This investment exceeds all of our long-term sustainable economic development criteria. We believe Wahgoshig's investment in DelShen's success will benefit the entire region," stated Babin.

The venture is expected to create 30 jobs during the start-up phase and up to 100 jobs once the facility is fully operational. There will be a training program developed to ensure people from the Wahgoshig First Nation get a crack at those jobs. This has a huge potential impact for a community with a population of 234.

"Bringing a new industry like pharmaceutical grade marijuana to the region gives aboriginal people more opportunities to stay here to work at good, safe jobs," said NDP MP Charlie Angus. Wahgoshig and the proposed facility are located in his riding of Timmins-James Bay.



The Penticton Indian Band in British Columbia's Interior is proposing to build an on-reserve medical marijuana facility that caters specifically to health conditions afflicting indigenous populations. (Ho/CP)

Wahgoshig is not the first First Nation to consider medical marijuana as an option for economic development. In 2014, the Penticton Indian Band in BC announced that it was also developing a multi-million dollar growing facility. In 2013, the Tobique First Nation in New Brunswick was working with an American company to build a medical marijuana research and treatment facility.

Medical marijuana is regulated by Health Canada, which lists 26 licensed producers across the country — 14 of which are in Ontario.

In Friday's press release, DelShen says the northern Ontario project is "awaiting notification on the final step toward receiving its production licence."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/ontario-first-nation-medical-marijuana-1.3340407>

On Dec. 1, World AIDS Day, think safe sex: GN says

Talk, use condoms, get tested, Nunavut health officials advise

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, December 01, 2015 - 7:02 am



Remember these? A display of the country-foods-themed condoms Pauktuutit distributed at the 2002 Arctic

Winter Games as a way to encourage safe sex among youth — and fight the spread of STIs. (FILE PHOTO)

On World AIDS Day, Dec. 1, Nunavummiut should keep their sexual health in mind and stay free of HIV.

That's because Aboriginal people, including Inuit, are four times more likely to contract HIV infections than non-aboriginal Canadians, the Government of Nunavut said in a release Nov. 30.

AIDS stands for acquired immune deficiency syndrome — an advanced form of the illness caused by HIV, the human immunodeficiency virus that weakens the immune system and can be spread by unprotected sex with an infected person.

In Nunavut, no HIV infections were diagnosed between 2006 and 2014, although the [Public Health Agency of Canada reports 22 Inuit HIV cases between 1998 and 2012](#).

But Nunavut is in [the throes of an outbreak of syphilis](#) — a risk factor for acquiring HIV.

Nunavut's health department says there are three things Nunavummiut can do to prevent the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections:

- talk about HIV/AIDS, syphilis, and other sexually-transmitted infections “to help reduce stigma, fear and shame;”
- use condoms (condoms and lubricants are free at health centres and other community locations in Nunavut;) and,
- get tested for HIV, syphilis and other STIs, before you have sex with a new partner, if you've had sex without a condom, and if you or your partner(s) have sex with someone other than each other.

Among Inuit, just over half of HIV cases between 1998 and 2012 were linked to heterosexual sex contact (54.6 per cent), followed by injection drug use exposure (22.7 per cent) and male-to-male sexual contact (13.6 per cent).

About one-quarter (27.3 per cent) of all reported Inuit HIV cases were female, and youth (aged 15 to 29 years old) represented almost one-quarter of all reported cases (22.7 per cent), the Public Health Agency of Canada says,

As part of Aboriginal Aids Awareness Week, Nov. 30 to Dec. 5, the Pauktuutit national Inuit women's association also plans to raise awareness about hepatitis C, a disease that infects the liver.

Hepatitis C causes a life-long infection, and over time can cause mild to serious liver scarring, liver cancer, liver failure and death, Pauktuutit's website says.

Often connected with HIV, hepatitis C is also thought to be [under-reported among Inuit](#).

And HIV can also worsen hepatitis C, by increasing the risk of liver damage, and speeding up the onset of liver damage following infection.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674on_dec_1_world_aids_day_think_safe_sex/

Diabetes rates soar in Canada: report

Aboriginal populations hit hardest; nearly nine per cent of Canadians have the disease

By Erin Ellis, Vancouver Sun December 1, 2015



Dr. Evan Adams, chief medical officer with the First Nations Health Authority, says diabetes is a ‘large-scale problem’ among B.C. First Nations.

First Nations are bearing the brunt of “an epidemic of the 21st century” with diabetes rates three to five times higher than the rest of the population, says a report from the Canadian Diabetes Association.

Reserves in particular — but also other low-income communities — need better access to affordable, healthy foods, says the report, released Monday in Vancouver.

On-reserve diabetes rates hover around 15 per cent, and are as high as 25 per cent in some cases. The disease is showing up more in children, too.

Poor diets high in fat, sugar and refined foods have contributed to 74 per cent of adults and 43 per cent of youth being overweight or obese on some reserves.

The report advocates a return to appropriate traditional foods, particularly in remote areas. Testing and treatment also need to improve to avoid complications like heart

disease, kidney failure and limb amputations that are more prevalent among aboriginal people.

Dr. Evan Adams, chief medical officer with the First Nations Health Authority, agrees that diabetes is a “large-scale problem” among B.C. First Nations, noting it needs to be addressed on several fronts.

“There’s no simple solution. Just a few things we need to do are related to food quality and safe places for people to get good physical activity. Also, we need medical intervention because we know that good medical care reduces mortality and complications like amputations and blindness,” Adams said.

He noted that diseases like diabetes are common in indigenous groups throughout the world.

“It’s almost certainly related to their living conditions, and we know from the U.S. as well that diabetes is very often connected to rates of poverty.”

However, he said that B.C.’s First Nations fare better than their counterparts across Canada. “Our rates are not as bad as they are nationally. B.C. First Nations are doing particularly well compared to other First Nations. But it’s absolutely still a large-scale problem. The scope of it is enormous.”

There are now 3.3 million Canadians with diabetes, making up 8.9 per cent of the population.

The numbers have continued to climb since the turn of the century, from 1.2 million in 2000 to 2.4 million in 2010.

Rates of Type 1 diabetes — an autoimmune condition that leads to inadequate insulin production in the body — have remained steady. It’s Type 2 diabetes, largely caused by an aging, overweight and inactive population, that’s now responsible for most cases of the disease. Left uncontrolled, both create high blood sugar levels that damage the body from head to toe.

Direct health care costs total about \$3 billion a year, the report says, projected to grow by more than 40 per cent in the next decade.

Dr. Jan Hux, chief science officer for the Canadian Diabetes Association, says stigma is an emerging issue surrounding the disease.

Research shows people with and without the disease blame individuals for developing Type 2 diabetes. That shows many people know it is linked to being overweight, inactive and eating unhealthy foods. But not all people with diabetes are overweight, says Hux, and many have a genetic predisposition to it.

Being poor in Canada can also mean not having access to affordable nutritious food.

“Once a person has diabetes, we shouldn’t be blaming them for it because we can’t know for that individual whether it was genetic or whether lifestyle was a contributing factor.

“And we know lifestyle choices aren’t always free choices. A person might live in an unwalkable neighbourhood that’s also a food desert. They have low income and are restricted to shopping at the local minimart where there are no healthy food choices,” Hux says.

Other highlights of the diabetes association’s report, *Driving Change*:

- People with diabetes are three times more likely to be hospitalized for cardiovascular disease (including heart attack, stroke and narrowing of arteries) than people without diabetes; 12 times more likely to be hospitalized with end-stage renal disease; and more than 20 times more likely to be hospitalized for amputation.
- Thirty-three per cent of people with diabetes say they hesitate to tell others about their diabetes because of stigma or discrimination; 15 per cent of people with diabetes say they’ve experienced discrimination.
- Symptoms of depression are found in up to 30 per cent of people with diabetes.
- People with low incomes find the extra cost of blood sugar tests and medication to be prohibitive: 40 per cent of those earning less than \$35,000 per year said they were unable to adhere to their treatment because of cost. Forty-five per cent reported choosing between buying food or paying rent and buying their medications; 18 per cent said they did not fill their prescriptions because of the cost.
- Foot complications from diabetes (which reduces circulation to the feet and can create painful nerve damage) are more common among lower-income earners. About 28 per cent of those earning less than \$50,000 reported poor circulation, compared to 14 per cent of people earning more than \$50,000.

The report recommends:

- Preventing diabetes and its complications in aboriginal communities.
- Reducing the stigma related to diabetes.
- Supporting children with diabetes in school.
- Improving diabetes foot care.

With a file by Brian Morton, Vancouver Sun

- See more at:

<http://www.vancouver.sun.com/health/diabetes+rates+soar+canada+report/11555569/story.html#sthash.h8Q93sAU.dpuf>

Global health day brings attention to AIDS and HIV



Rodney Little Mustache was a guest speaker at the event and has been living with HIV since 1994.

[Colleen Schmidt](#), Senior Digital Producer

Published Tuesday, December 1, 2015 2:42PM MST

[World Aids Day](#) is held on December 1st each year to band people together in the fight against HIV and health care leaders are calling for continued support, as almost 35 million people remain infected worldwide.

The global health day was held for the first time in 1988 and is a reminder that there is still a need to raise money and awareness to improve education and lessen the stigmas for those diagnosed with the virus.

About 75,000 Canadians were living with HIV at the end of 2014 and according to national statistics about 9% of those were Aboriginal people.



Aboriginal Awareness Week was launched in Calgary on December 1, 2015.

The infection rates for aboriginal communities in Canada are higher than the national average and on Tuesday aboriginal leaders gathered in Calgary to launch [Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week](#).

The goal of the initiative is to connect national aboriginal organizations, government partners, health care providers and community leaders to focus on reducing the infection and death rates in their communities.

“The common challenges that we’re facing, metis, first nations, Inuit are discrimination, a lack of quality health care services to our people in isolated communities. The lack of funding where we cannot provide education and services to the people at the grassroots level,” said Emma Palmantier, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network Chair.

Raye St. Denys is the executive director of Shining Mountain Living Community Services, an organization that provides housing primarily for aboriginal women at risk, and says the vulnerabilities from social determinants of health are higher among aboriginal populations.

“A lot of our people live in isolated or remote communities. First Nations people can’t access medical dollars to get them to treatment and get them back. Metis people cannot. So those are barriers and there’s only two clinics in Alberta, one is here in Calgary and one is in Edmonton with specialists, so if they are going for medication, for treatment, to see their specialist, they have to drive from Pincher Creek or Fort Mac or Lloydminster to the closest centre,” she said.

Rodney Little Mustache was diagnosed with HIV in June of 1994 and says people need to talk about it to end the stigma.

“The aboriginal community needs to speak up more to make it a priority,” he said. “I think it’s time for the government and everybody to just step forward and just start addressing these issues because there’s a lot of issues like funding issues, that’s one of the biggest problems right now is funding for HIV and aboriginal specific programs.”

“I think for me, living with HIV isn’t harmful, it’s the stigma that’s the most harmful for people living with HIV,” said Kerrigan Johnson, who was diagnosed with HIV in 2005.

Some aboriginal HIV and AIDS Statistics

- HIV rates are about 3.6 times higher for aboriginal people than other Canadians
-
- HIV exposure for Aboriginal people is mainly from Injection drug use
- According to 2014 national HIV estimates, over 6800 aboriginal people in Canada are living with AIDS

Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week is being accompanied by workshops across the country to continue discussions on aboriginal HIV and AIDS issues in Canada and will focus on women, youth, Inuit, and international developments.

More than 35 million people have died of HIV or AIDS since the virus was first identified over 30 years ago.

Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week is from November 30 – December 5th, for more information click [HERE](#).

Direct Link: <http://calgary.ctvnews.ca/global-health-day-brings-attention-to-aids-and-hiv-1.2682131>

Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week focusing on problems and solutions

By [David Boushy](#) Reporter Global News, December 1, 2015 6:02 pm



CALGARY – Aboriginal AIDS Awareness week officially launched on Tuesday, and across the country leaders are discussing community-based approaches to deal with the disease.

In Canada, infection rates are more than three-and-a-half times higher in First Nations, Metis and Inuit people than in the rest of the population.

“HIV is more profound in aboriginal communities, so it’s obviously an alarming, high rate,” said Kerrigan Johnson, who learned she was HIV-positive 10 years ago.

Rodney Little Mustache spoke about his struggles with HIV at the launch event in Calgary.

“In June of 1984 I found out I was HIV-positive,” Little Mustache told the crowd.

“Today I speak my own truth.”

Little Mustache told the crowd silence isn’t the answer.

“A lot of people are silenced because of discrimination,” he said, adding “it’s hard because we’re First Nations.”

Kerrigan Johnson said there's a stigma attached to HIV/AIDS and that other stereotypes compound the problem..

"We're often labeled as alcoholics – we have more homeless rates in a lot of the provinces and stuff like that, so it's more profound," she said.

Another problem – a lack of education and treatment programs for people living in isolated communities.

"There are no facilities in northern communities," said Emma Palmantier, Chair of the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network.

"They have to move to urban cities to get the service that they need."

Aboriginal leaders are hoping the federal government will come forward with funding to help them develop effective community solutions as they strive for zero infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths.

Workshops to discuss HIV/AIDS in the aboriginal population are being held in a variety of cities across Canada this week.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2373783/aboriginal-aids-awareness-week-focusing-on-problems-and-solutions/>

Child advocate concerned about suicides of aboriginal youth in care

[CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 01, 2015 5:50 PM MT Last Updated: Dec 01, 2015 5:50 PM MT



The annual report from child and youth advocate Del Graff was released this week. (CBC)

More than half of the deaths or cases of serious injury under investigation by the Alberta child and youth advocate this year involved aboriginal youth who attempted or died by suicide.

The advocate's annual report, released this week, says the office will complete 13 full investigative reviews this fiscal year. Eight of those cases involve aboriginal youth.

"This is cause for serious concern," the report from advocate Del Graff states.

As a result, the advocate's office plans to convene a committee of experts to examine the circumstances of the aboriginal youth, try to identify what contributed to their circumstances and make recommendations for change, the report adds.

The report also reveals an office that has too much to do with too little staff.

The advocate's mandate expanded in May 2014 to investigate cases of children who die or who are seriously injured up to two years after they receive child intervention services.

The change means the office looked at 71 cases of death or serious injury from Apr. 1, 2014 to Mar. 31, 2015, compared to 35 the day before.

The advocate doubled its investigative staff from three to six but that still isn't enough, the report says. While the increase has helped, more resources are required by the office "to effectively meet its investigative review mandate," the report states.

In December 2014, funding for the advocate was cut by \$275,000 by the previous Progressive Conservative government. The money was restored by the NDP government in September.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/child-advocate-concerned-about-suicides-of-aboriginal-youth-in-care-1.3346271>

Alberta child advocate to focus on aboriginal youth suicides: report

[Mariam Ibrahim, Edmonton Journal](#)

Published on: December 1, 2015 | Last Updated: December 1, 2015 6:24 PM MST



Child and Youth Advocate Del Graff Shaughn Butts / Edmonton Journal

Aboriginal youth who attempted or died by suicide are the focus of more than 60 per cent of upcoming investigations from Alberta child and youth advocate Del Graff.

Of the 13 investigative reviews the advocate's office expects to release in the coming months, seven involve aboriginal youth who died by suicide and one examines the attempted suicide of an aboriginal girl, according to the 2014-15 annual report released by Graff's office Tuesday.

"This is cause for serious concern," his report states.

Graff said in an interview his office is "especially concerned" about the issue of youth suicide, particularly among aboriginal youth in the province.

"We just feel we've got to bring some significant attention to this issue because we need to have government take action," he said.

As of March 2015, 69 per cent of children in care were aboriginal, the report notes.

The reviews into the eight cases will likely be completed and released by January and will include specific recommendations for the province, Graff added.

But he noted Alberta doesn't currently have a suicide prevention strategy to address the troubling figures.

"Having a robust suicide prevention strategy that is focused particularly on the interests of young people and young people who are of aboriginal ancestry ... would, I think, be a huge forward step," he said. "That could make a huge difference in this province, because there isn't one now."

Human Services Minister Irfan Sabir was unavailable for an interview, but said in a written statement his ministry is working to reduce the number of aboriginal youth in Alberta's care.

"We also acknowledge the rate of aboriginal youth suicide is tragic and troubling," Sabir said. "This is why our government restored funding to human services and included \$5 million in child intervention funding for mental health."

He said he will meet with Graff to "further discuss solutions to these serious issues."

The annual report notes Graff's office received 71 reports of serious injury or death in 2014-15, up from 35 the previous year. Of those, 41 — or 58 per cent — involved aboriginal youth.

The uptick in total case files was the result of legislative changes in 2014 that significantly expanded the child and youth advocate's investigative mandate to include children who died within two years of receiving child intervention services.

Graff said his office isn't expecting the numbers to continue to grow over the coming year.

Direct Link: <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/alberta-child-advocate-to-focus-on-aboriginal-youth-suicides-report>

Still a lot of work to do in breaking stigmas says Cree man living with HIV

[National News](#) | December 3, 2015 by [Brandi Morin](#) |



(Ken Ward, 57, was diagnosed with HIV in 1989. Photo: Brandi Morin/APTN)

Brandi Morin
APTN National News

Ken Ward didn't think it could happen to him. But in 1989 it did. That's when he was diagnosed with HIV. Ward instantly went into survival mode.

"The news itself was traumatizing," said Ward, now 57, who had contracted HIV from using a dirty needle. He was given just three to six months to live.

It was while combing through a mixed "bag of emotions" of comprehending the situation when for a moment he thought of ending his life.

"I figured I had two options. Either kill myself with a cocktail of drugs and a needle and say, 'What's the use?'...but I thought about it and said, 'No, I think I want to try this other side of life, maybe I owe it to myself to walk this path to live the best I can with the quality of life I do have left to live clean and sober.'"

But his worst fear wasn't dying. It was the fear of whether he would be accepted and loved by his family and community when they learned he was HIV positive.

It was a shameful disease to have, said Ward, who initially told his loved ones he had cancer because it was considered more acceptable. He remembered back then there was a lot of hysteria about HIV and AIDS- an aggressive and contagious disease, with no cure that carried an imminent death sentence.

But he knew he couldn't go on hiding the truth for long. Within a couple of months he broke the news to his mother and siblings.

"It was a very dramatic moment- there was a lot of crying, shrieking," he said. "Then we got back together and processed it together."

His family and home community of Enoch Cree Nation, west of Edmonton, Alta, did come together to support him. It's something that he attributes to having survived so long.

"A lot of people rely on prescription or medical treatment, but family and community acceptance is so important. The care is not only the physical well-being. It's the emotional well-being," said Ward. If a person has that support, acceptance and understanding, chances are that they will survive and live for much longer."

The stigma around HIV/AIDS is what has driven him to travel the country raising awareness over the last two decades. All these years later stigma's still exist within Aboriginal communities, he said, along an alarming increase in HIV/AIDS.

The latest statistics show that Aboriginal people in Canada are getting hit the hardest. According to catie.ca, Canada's source for up to date HIV and Hepatitis C information, Aboriginal people are 4 times more likely to get HIV than non-Aboriginal Canadians.

Denise Lambert, program designer at the Kimamow Atoskanow Foundation in Edmonton, an organization that works to bring awareness primarily to HIV and AIDs, is not surprised by the latest numbers. She believes the stats aren't accurately collected and fears the situation is a lot worse than documented.

"They're (stats) just a best guess and doesn't sit well with me," said Lambert. "It's the best estimate that the government can come up with to figure out how this disease is affecting us. It's likely worse for us because there's not supportive testing strategies in our communities."

She explained that the stats are skewed because not everyone may identify as First Nation, Metis or Inuit when being surveyed. And the statistics are always delayed, in this case they're two years behind.

In some instances people will avoid getting tested, she said and 21 per cent of people living with HIV don't even know they have it.

"It's not a problem that's easily solved. It's not going to go away. Because of population growth, if we don't start changing some of our foundational issues- we need to get into a healthy way of life again," she said. "It's really about getting back out into the communities to let people know that we're here if they want to learn."

The fastest way HIV/AIDS is spreading is through intravenous drug use. Lambert says addressing the issue also goes along with addressing underlying factors to addictions, which is related to trauma experienced by Aboriginal People.

"People sometimes don't get the connection that the trauma and hurt is also part of why people use so much whether it's alcohol, drugs or other substances and behaviour," she said. "Our painful history is sometimes soothed by drugs and alcohol. We have great pains still that people don't know how to deal with and it's evidenced."

She's known Ward for over 25 years and calls him a brother and a visionary.

"Despite what he went through this was a role that was needed. He was actually able to fill that role by sharing his story so that other people didn't have to go through what he's gone through," she said.

He's had brushes with death along the way, including other health issues like triple bypass surgery and TB detected in his lymph nodes. However, the HIV is no longer detectable in his bloodstream and he is feeling fairly healthy now a day.

"The journey hasn't been easy...", and the journey continues for Ward, who said there's still a lot of work to do.

"People still say to me you're not going to go yet, Ken, because your work is not done yet. The elders who have always been my strongest allies, they told me, 'We're going to

pray for you that you live a good and long life and have a good journey...’ That was certainly a very memorable moment in my life,” said Ward.

To learn more about the latest HIV/AIDS research in Canada head to www.catie.ca

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/12/03/still-a-lot-of-work-to-do-in-breaking-stigmas-says-cree-man-living-with-hiv/>

Helping patients navigate health-care system

[HenryTye Glazebrook](#)

Published on: November 28, 2015 | Last Updated: November 28, 2015 1:27 PM CST



SASKATOON, SASK.; NOVEMBER 6, 2015 - 9999 bridges1 - Health Navigator Delia Sylvester-Allberg in the office with other navigators at St. Paul's Hospital, November 6, 2015 (GORD WALDNER/Saskatoon StarPhoenix) Gord Waldner / Sasaktoon StarPhoenix

Years ago, Delia Sylvestre-Allberg remembers having her housekeeping shifts at Royal University Hospital interrupted by doctors asking for her help with a patient.

Since Sylvestre-Allberg is a lifelong speaker of the Dene language, she was occasionally brought in to act as a translator when doctors and nurses were working with a patient who didn't understand English. This time, they asked her to help calm a patient as they underwent a minor procedure.

“I went into the operating room with another person. I was holding their hand because they were afraid of being under the knife. The whole time, I was able to explain exactly, step-by-step, what was going on. ‘They are going to cut you open. You’re not going to feel it because you’re frozen’ — all that kind of stuff,” Sylvestre-Allberg said.

“The person was older and panicked, but the process wasn’t that long and it was good.”

Today, translating is a common part of Sylvestre-Allberg’s day in her job as a health navigator for First Nations and Metis Health Services, a program developed in

partnership between the Central Urban Metis Federation Inc., the Kinistin Saulteaux Nation and the Saskatoon Health Region.

Between its creation at St. Paul's Hospital in 2013 and subsequent expansion to RUH in March, the health navigators have seen 2,718 walk-in and referral patients.

The program is intended as a way create a more patient-centric approach to hospitals for First Nations people by co-ordinating health-care needs, easing their way as they move through a hospital system they may not be familiar with, helping staff to understand the complex issues faced by First Nations and Metis people and creating greater awareness of the ongoing complications caused by residential schooling.

Health navigators frequently work very closely, though not exclusively, with those from small communities in northern Saskatchewan. These people often come to Saskatoon for medical help only to find themselves overwhelmed by the larger city, alone and with little or no grasp of the English language that is predominantly spoken.

(From left) Valerie Bradfield, Hermaline Bear, Sandy Naccarato, Delia Alberg-Sylvestre, Juanita Graham, and Gilbert Kewistep outside their office at Royal University Hospital.
Liam Richards / B

Alongside Sylvestre-Alberg's ability to speak Dene, the First Nations and Metis Health Services' staff of seven includes two Cree-speaking health navigators and Saulteaux-speaking Gilbert Kewistep, who is a cultural adviser for the program. Kewistep frequently joins the health navigators when they meet with patients and helps the team to better explain the significance of First Nations traditions and practices to other hospital staff.

"They don't understand some of the languages that the doctors and nurses use, the medical terms, so the navigators are there to interpret in that way," Kewistep said. "You see them smiling when you talk to them in their own language. It gives me a lot of hope."

Kewistep remembers one Saulteaux-speaking patient who had recently had his leg amputated due to complications with diabetes. After the surgery, continued attempts at walking out of his hospital room caused the man to repeatedly collapse on the floor in pain. When Kewistep was called in to speak with the man in his own language, he discovered that he hadn't yet realized his leg had been removed.

"He kept falling on the floor thinking his leg was still there. They had to keep putting mats down beside his bed," Kewistep said, adding he joked with the man to ease the stressful experience.

"As soon as I got there I made a crack. Especially with First Nations people, language has a calming effect. You say something in a joking kind of way — 'Why are you being the

way you are?’ — but you say it in Saulteaux. You say it in that way and I could just see his face light up.”

Kewistep has tried to visit the patient every day as he heals. He’s still in hospital, but the First Nations and Metis Health Services program is currently working to set him up with home care services and a wheelchair-accessible residence once he’s released from hospital care.

Outside of translating, Kewistep personally strives to connect the gaps in trust that many patients have with the hospital system due to their time in residential school.

With his own experiences in the schooling program as a young man, Kewistep is able to better express to health-care professionals the feelings of suspicion and doubt some First Nations people feel toward any authoritative figure, as well as help those patients to gain greater confidence in the help they are receiving.

In his own life, Kewistep recalls his grandmother being threatened with arrest if she tried to prevent he and his siblings from being taken into residential schooling.

“I haven’t forgotten. I’ve forgiven the people that did that to us. Remembering those that didn’t have the opportunity — my brothers, my sisters, my grandmother — I think of them when I tell the story. They’re the ones who really made an impact in my life,” he said.

Ashley Sasbrink-Harkema, an emergency physician for the Saskatoon Health Region, says mending the relationship between First Nations people and authority figures is key to making better health-care practices possible.

“Trust is a big issue for those that went through residential school, and I think a lot of First Nations patients find it hard to trust western medicine,” Sasbrink-Harkema said.

“Even though we’re trying to improve health care and help them and treat them, there’s always this underlying scepticism or trust or paranoia that what they’re getting is the appropriate health-care treatment that everyone else is receiving.”

Sasbrink-Harkema had walked past the First Nations and Metis Health Services offices countless times before he was properly introduced to their services. Now he’s working to give them a bigger presence in the emergency department, and is a vocal supporter of the benefit its health navigators provide.

“A lot of these patients, it’s brand new to them. They don’t know what’s going on, and now there’s someone to help guide them through,” he said.

“It helps First Nations patients in their own health care. It also helps health-care providers learn and be more aware of First Nations values and traditional teachings and medicine, and helps health-care providers understand that the First Nations community has a

different perspective on health care itself. I think it helps us realize that and provide overall better health care for this community.”

Valerie Bradfield, who started as a health navigator in 2013 and was promoted earlier this year to lead contact for the program, says drawing from their own lives to assist patients is common practice for herself and her colleagues.

“I come from the North. I have family that live on reserve. We know. We walk that road. We know exactly what goes on in these communities, and to be able to advocate for them is the hugest piece. That’s what drew me to this program, to be able to help share those stories,” Bradfield said.

Though the First Nations and Metis Health Services office has already helped many patients, doing everything from translating to facilitating home care and connecting with their local community health resources, Bradfield is looking forward to continuing to improve Aboriginal People’s stay in Saskatoon hospitals.

“It has impacted the whole system, and there’s so much more that we can do still,” she said. “If we’re able to keep building on the program and working towards the goal, collectively, that will make a big impact.”

Direct Link: <http://thestarphoenix.com/life/bridges/helping-patients-navigate-health-care-system>

Aboriginal History & Heritage

The pass system: another dark secret in Canadian history



For more than 60 years, many Indigenous Peoples had to get approval to leave their reserve. Passes were handed out at the discretion of the Indian agent. (Alex Williams/Tamarack Productions)

Canadians are becoming increasingly aware of residential schools and their impacts on First Nations people. But many have not yet heard about another system of segregation — one that often kept First Nations confined to their communities.

The pass system was in effect for 60 years on reserves across western Canada. Any First Nations person who wanted to leave their community, for any reason, had to have a pass approved by the reserve's Indian agent that they would carry with them, stipulating the leave's purpose and duration.

Filmmaker Alex Williams decided to dig into this dark chapter in Canadian history for his first documentary, *The Pass System*.

Williams said the pass system came into effect after the North-West Rebellion in 1885.

"It was an illegal... system that was put in place as a temporary 'security measure' after the events of 1885 that stuck around for over 60 years," he said.

"Its intent was, in the words of one historian, to keep [indigenous] people out of the towns and cities."

Williams said he was inspired to make the film because growing up in Saskatoon he saw the social divide in the community. It was something he didn't understand. So he started asking his own family, then historians if they'd heard of the pass system.

That search led him to a number of First Nations elders who shared their stories.

"I was quite honoured and I want to publicly thank them for taking the time to sit down with me," he said.

Williams said although the pass system is believed to have ended around 1941, it may have continued in different ways after that.

"Indian agents were judges, and First Nations weren't citizens until 1960 so official means of resistance were very difficult."

As Williams dug deeper into the topic, he discovered why so few people have heard of the pass system. He found a letter from 1941, "in which the director of Indian Affairs at that time said, 'Send us all your passbooks and they may be destroyed.'"

While doing research for the film, Williams spent time in the National Archives looking for documentation, but only found two passes.

"So there's enormous questions about the record-keeping process," he said. "Also, I think we have to take into account, that many people were not interested to understand the emotional impact of these and other systems on First Nations people."

After spending five years immersed in the topic, Alex Williams hopes a film like *The Pass System* adds to Canada's understanding of our own history.

"It helped me understand my society better and it made me understand the divisions in society and the healing that needs to happen."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/exploring-the-past-present-and-future-of-life-in-indigenous-canada-1.3336594/the-pass-system-another-dark-secret-in-canadian-history-1.3338520>

Aboriginal Identity & Representation

Nunavut woman accuses U.K. fashion label of appropriating Inuit design

Salome Awa says U.K. label KTZ replicated her great-grandfather's traditional Inuit garment without permission from family



Left: A model walks the runway during the KTZ show on January 11, in London, England. Right: The design from which the KTZ sweater was taken, according to Nunavut's Salome Awa.

By: [Jillian Kestler-D'Amours](#) Staff Reporter, Published on Thu Nov 26 2015

Salome Awa says she was furious to discover that a U.K. fashion label had unveiled a sweater with a design that looks nearly identical to one created by her great-grandfather.

But more than anger, the Nunavut woman said she felt shocked that her ancestor's unique design had been taken without permission.

"I went through all the garments and there it was: my great-grandfather's garment, designed exactly the same way as he envisioned," Awa, a CBC Nunavut morning show producer, told the Star in a telephone interview on Thursday morning.

“I was shocked, actually, because it’s sacred.”

Her great-grandfather was a shaman, Awa explained. He had asked his wife to make a unique parka with hands on the front to protect him from someone who might try to push him into the ocean and drown him.

Danish explorer Knud Rasmussen took a photo of her great-grandfather in the parka during his travels and visits with Inuit families in Canada’s Arctic in the 1920s, Awa said.

The photo, which dates to 1922, was published in the book *Northern Voices: Inuit Writing in English*.

“To wear it (the design) is almost like (a) mockery of my great-grandfather’s spiritual well-being,” Awa said. “There’s no other garment like it anywhere else in this world.”

London-based label KTZ did not respond to the Star’s request for comment.

KTZ unveiled the sweater as part of its fall 2015 men’s collection and the company was selling the “shaman toweeling sweatshirt” online for about \$845 (Canadian).

KTZ says its clothes are known for their “raw energy and contemporary urban edge, but also for embracing ethnographic references and multiculturalism.”

But the company has been accused of appropriating indigenous designs in the past. Last year, northern Cheyenne/Crow designer Bethany Yellowtail accused KTZ of using her designs without permission.

She told the Star she contacted an intellectual property lawyer about possible legal action, and that she would discuss the issue with her family members before making any decisions.

Meanwhile, she said the most important thing is for an international mechanism to be in place to stop companies from appropriating indigenous designs.

“This garment in particular was used by a shaman and used for sacred reasons. That has to be stopped. Many of these designs by indigenous people have a meaning; every cut, every stitch, has a meaning,” she said.

“They are sacred . . . and they should not be duplicated, copied, and made money (off of).”

Direct Link: <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/11/26/nunavut-woman-accuses-uk-fashion-label-of-appropriating-inuit-design.html>

U.K. fashion house pulls copied Inuit design, here's their apology



KTZ has apologized for using a sacred Inuit design in their high-end sweater. (KTZ website / Kieran Oudshoorn/CBC (from book Northern Voices))

Friday November 27, 2015

Fashion designers KTZ have apologized to the Inuit great-granddaughter of a shaman whose design they copied.

On [Wednesday](#), Salome Awa, who is also a producer at CBC North, told us that the sweater being sold by KTZ for over \$900 was a copy of her ancestor's sacred parka. Until this week, the garment was also sold at stores [here in Canada](#).

Today, she told us the apology she received by email was "bittersweet."

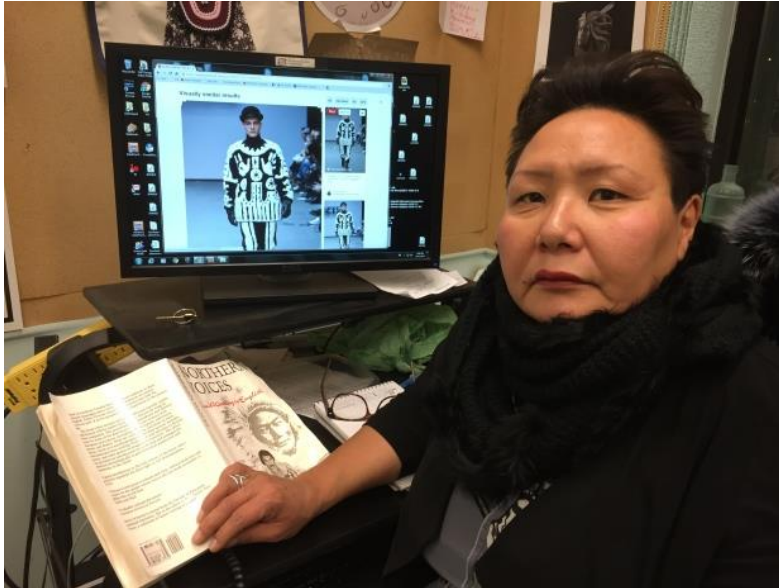
"I'm kind of happy about it but sad at the same time," she tells *As It Happens* co-host Carol Off. "They didn't even mention an apology to my great-grandfather and they didn't even offer any monetary gains to our family."



Designer Marjan Pejoski acknowledges the crowd after a presentation of the KTZ Fall/Winter 2015 collection during New York Fashion Week, February 17, 2015. Pejoski is the creative director of the London-based fashion label. (Lucas Jackson/Reuters)

This week's controversy is not the first time KTZ has been [criticized](#) for using indigenous designs. The company claims their patterns "capture the beauty, truth and power behind indigenous things," acting as a tribute rather than an appropriation of the designs.

"This is a stolen piece. There is no way that this fashion designer could have thought of this exact duplicate by himself," Awa says.



'How dare you use this garment design that was envisioned by my great grandfather,' said Salome Awa, 'It's his design, his vision, it's so meaningful to him.' (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

In addition to the letter emailed to Awa, the company announced it's pulling the design from stores and their website.

Awa credits the intense media attention for getting the offensive item pulled, but also the many people who contacted KTZ to voice their concern.

"Yes I said it to many media outlets. But I think it's the people out there, the public, who helped them to make an action."

Here is the full letter:

Dear Salome

Thank you so much for contacting us and for giving us a chance to express our point of view.

Over the last 20 years KTZ has always been inspired by and paid homage to indigenous cultures and tribes around the world.

It's part of KTZ's DNA to celebrate multiculturalism as a form of art and to encourage appreciation for traditions, ethnicities and religions' diversity.

At the time the piece in question was released (January 2015) the Inuit community was credited in our press release and online features, for example <http://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2015-menswear/ktz>.

KTZ is a very small UK based company - with a team counting less than 15 people employed across the globe and with ethnic backgrounds ranging from Macedonian, Greek, Portuguese, Polish, German, Italian, Dutch, Japanese, Nigerian, Chinese and Indonesian. Our work is never intended to offend any community or religion.

We sincerely apologise to you and anyone who felt offended by our work as it certainly wasn't our intention.

We have already removed the item from sale online and will remove the item in question from our stores.

Kindest regards

KTZ

Salome Awa said after reading the letter, she still has questions for the company.

"I want to know how they got it, how they obtained the exact replica and I want to know why they didn't ask our family?"

"Did they think we did not exist?"

Hear Awa's full reaction to the apology, by clicking the Listen audio link above.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/asithappens/as-it-happens-friday-edition-1.3339772/u-k-fashion-house-pulls-copied-inuit-design-here-s-their-apology-1.3339779>

Edmonton mayor, fans plan Tuesday celebration for champion Eskimos

[Elise Stolte, Edmonton Journal](#)

[Norm Cowley, Edmonton Journal](#)

Published on: November 30, 2015 | Last Updated: November 30, 2015 7:58 PM MST

Fans of the victorious Edmonton Eskimos were invited to celebrate and watch the team hoist the Grey Cup high Tuesday in Churchill Square.

But a few dozen green-and-gold-clad fans showed up at the Executive Flight Centre in the Edmonton International Airport on Monday morning to give a tired team a loud and rowdy welcome home.

The Eskimos defeated the Ottawa Redblacks 26-20 in the CFL's championship game at Winnipeg's Investors Group Field on Sunday.

The City of Edmonton and Mayor Don Iveson will hold a celebration rally for the 103rd Grey Cup champions from noon to 1 p.m. Tuesday at Churchill Square. Fans are asked to wear green and gold. The Eskimos cheer team and mascots will be on hand as players hoist the Cup.

There will be some temporary lane closures around Churchill Square, but the weather should co-operate, with Environment Canada calling for sunny skies and a high of 1 C.

It's Edmonton's first Grey Cup since 2005, and the 14th in the team's history.

"We invite everyone to come down. It should be amazing," Iveson said Monday. "The team just ground it out. Being down 13-0 and just unfazed, that was amazing to watch. That was cool."

Iveson was in Winnipeg to see the game. He won a bet with Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson, who will be wearing an Eskimos jersey in public sometime this week. Iveson will be sending his weight (215 pounds) in food to the Ottawa Food Bank.

"That's a very small price to pay to be smiling as much as I am," said Iveson, grinning on his way into budget hearings at City Hall on Monday. He had already been up for five hours.

Iveson said he got to hold the Cup.

"It was very sweet of the players to give me 15 seconds with a pretty amazing Canadian institution that they earned. I'm just a fan. I grew up remembering those Cup wins in the '80s. I've been a lifelong Eskimos fan. My kids love the Eskimos. Everyone's excited."



Mike Reilly has his photo taken with Ray Hawley. Shaughn Butts / Edmonton Journal

Many Edmontonians are calling on the city to bring back the City of Champions slogan, which was taken off the city's entry signs last spring.

"The city still is the City of Champions, whether it says so on the signs or not," said Iveson. "Don't sweat it."

As for the idea of changing the team's name, Iveson said: "When a national organization that speaks for Inuit peoples steps forward, that has to be taken very seriously. I believe it is being taken very seriously."

Last week, [Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami](#), said it is time to reconsider the name. It's the first time the group has weighed in on the issue. "Eskimo" is considered a derogatory name for the Inuit people, whose homelands stretch across Canada's North.

Team president and CEO Len Rhodes said that the Eskimos will invite the Inuit community to discuss the issue.

"First and foremost, we want to be respectful by hearing what they want to share with us and we'll take it from there," Rhodes said at the airport.

"We're really not at any point of any (name) changes right now. What's important for everyone to realize is that we're so proud that we always use the word 'Eskimos' in a positive way. We don't use any caricatures, it's never derogatory, we're a class organization, community-owned, and we want to make sure we're inclusive."

Direct Link: <http://edmontonjournal.com/sports/football/cfl/edmonton-eskimos/edmonton-mayor-and-fans-plan-celebration-for-eskimos-tuesday>

CBC suspends online comments on indigenous stories

[Simon Houtt](#), The Globe and Mail

Published Monday, Nov. 30, 2015 2:01PM EST

Last updated Monday, Nov. 30, 2015 7:13PM EST

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is temporarily suspending comments on its online stories about indigenous people, after its editors determined that too many comments were being posted that it deemed "off the mark" or "racist."

In an online note to readers, the CBC's acting director of digital news said that comments on those stories will be barred until editors can review moderation procedures.

“While there are a number of subjects and groups of people who seem to bring out higher-than-average numbers of worrisome comments, we find ourselves with a unique situation when it comes to indigenous-related stories,” wrote Brodie Fenlon.

“We’ve noticed over many months that these stories draw a disproportionate number of comments that cross the line and violate our guidelines. Some of the violations are obvious, some not so obvious; some comments are clearly hateful and vitriolic, some are simply ignorant. And some appear to be hate disguised as ignorance (i.e., racist sentiments expressed in benign language).”

CBC uses third-party moderators to monitor comments. Still, Mr. Fenlon said in an interview, “We do see people who use language that, on the surface, if you’re a moderator and you’re not familiar with the story, it might not stand out to you as a racist comment, but in the context of the story it becomes obvious what it is, even though it’s almost disguised.”

As part of the review, Mr. Fenlon said, “indigenous and non-indigenous staff are going to look at the comments that ... have caused concern, and say: ‘What are the common things we’re seeing? Could we provide some guidance for the moderators?’”

He added that the review, which he expects will wrap up early in the new year, may result in new practices such as moderators reading the stories or other background material.

Many outlets are struggling with the thorny issues associated with providing platforms for sometimes offensive speech. In September, the National Post forced all potential commenters to sign in through Facebook, in a move that editor-in-chief Anne Marie Owens said “forces more accountability by connecting online comments back to the individual’s Facebook account.” She explained: “We want to be the place to house intelligent, respectful debates on our online forums.”

The Sun chain of newspapers, which is a corporate sibling of the Post, announced it would close the commenting system on its stories until it could figure out a better system.

The Globe and Mail asks its moderators to review all comments submitted on digital stories about indigenous issues – and a few other hot-button topics – before they are posted to ensure that they meet its stated guidelines. Jim Sheppard, executive editor of globeandmail.com, said Monday The Globe has not noticed any new volume or new problems with comments on articles about indigenous issues, and has no plans to change its existing policies.

Over the past year, CBC has been opening more of its stories to commenting. In a statement on its website, it says that, on average, “we publish 85 to 90 per cent of the comments that are submitted to CBC.ca.” Still, it notes, “on stories that cover sensitive or highly controversial topics, the rejection rate can at times be 50 per cent or more submissions rejected.”

Mr. Fenlon also said that CBC generally doesn't publish stories to Facebook – where it cannot moderate the comments – “if we think they're going to create a conversation in the Facebook space that's really off the mark, in terms of our preference for civil discourse.” Still, he acknowledged that CBC has posted many indigenous news stories on that platform.

Moderation of comments on CBC.ca is done by ICUC, a Manitoba-based company that performs the same function for The Globe and Mail.

Mr. Fenlon rejected the suggestion that the suspension would lead to accusations of censorship.

“I'm not concerned, because we're not going to change our guidelines,” he said. “You agree to certain limitations on free speech when you comment on these spaces, just as you do in general society. We have those rules in place – we just want to make sure they're working. The goal is actually to create a space where we can have all kinds of disparate views and debate and, even if it's pointed, we like that. We want really vigorous, healthy, oppositional debate. But it has to be within the guidelines of respect and not cross the line of hate.”

The move comes amid attempts by CBC to expand its engagement with indigenous communities, which included the opening of a new aboriginal digital news unit in late 2013.

Mr. Fenlon noted that may have played a part in Monday's announcement. “There's perhaps a heightened awareness about what we're doing, how we're reporting on these communities, how these communities are engaging with us,” he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/cbc-suspends-online-comments-on-indigenous-stories/article27531757/>

Inuit shaman parka 'copied' by KTZ design well-studied by anthropologists

'It's the most unique garment known to have been created in the Canadian Arctic,' says Smithsonian researcher

By Sima Sahar Zerehi, [CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 02, 2015 4:00 AM CT Last Updated: Dec 02, 2015 8:19 AM CT



U.K. design label, KTZ, 'copied' the design from an Inuit shaman's parka considered by experts as the 'most unique garment known to have been created in the Canadian Arctic.' (Kieran Oudshoorn/CBC (from book Northern Voices) /Tristan Fewings/Getty Images)

An Inuit shaman's parka copied by KTZ, a U.K. design label, has been the subject of study for generations and is considered by experts as the "most unique garment known to have been created in the Canadian Arctic."

The fashion label's fall 2015 men's collection includes a number of garments based on traditional Inuit designs, including a sweater that has a pattern almost identical to that on a shaman's caribou skin parka that dates back to the early 1900s.

The design was used without the consent of the shaman's descendants in Nunavut. In response to a CBC News report last week, KTZ apologized to the family and pulled the sweater from its online stores.

The story has sparked interest in the origins of the parka and the meaning behind its symbolic designs.

"It's the most unique garment known to have been created in the Canadian Arctic," said Bernadette Driscoll Engelstad, a research collaborator with the Smithsonian Arctic Studies Centre.

Packed away in storage

Driscoll Engelstad came across the shaman's robe in 1978.

"It was packed away in a storage box in the storeroom of the American Museum of Natural History and I don't think it had been exhibited or even maybe looked at since its collection," she said.



Rhoda Ungalaq's mother was one of the seamstresses from Igloolik commissioned to make a replica of the famous shaman's parka. 'My mother was a very good designer and I think this was a special project for her, she worked very hard on it,' said Ungallaq. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

The parka was purchased by a whaling ship captain, George Comer, who regularly travelled to the Arctic between 1897 to 1912.

Experts agree that Comer purchased the parka in Igloolik from Ava (Awa), the son of shaman Qingailisag. The parka came into the collection of the American Museum of Natural History around 1902.

The design on the parka is what sets it apart from other shaman robes from the region, said Driscoll Engelstad.

Experts say that the parka, which includes a pair of gloves and a hat, bears some resemblance to a Siberian shaman's coat.

"There are other types of shaman's garments across the Arctic, but none of them are of a vision," said Driscoll Engelstad.

The story behind the design

There are multiple theories of what the design on the shaman's robe represents.

Franz Boas, a German-American anthropologist who has been called the "father of American anthropology," first wrote about the design in the garment in 1907 in the second volume of his book *The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay*.



In 1983 the social anthropologist Bernard Saladin d'Anglure commissioned three replicas in partnership with the community in Igloolik. Above Martha Angugatiaq Ungalaq, models the replica she helped create. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

In the book, Boas recounts the story told to him by Comer, of the shaman Qingailisaq fatally wounding a caribou buck on a hunt. The animal transforms into a pregnant woman, who dies along with her child. The shaman is then confronted by her brothers who are also caribou people.

"The men told him to return to his people and tell them what had happened and to have his clothing made in the same way as the woman," wrote Boas.

There's another version of the story told by Ava, shaman Qingailisaq's son, 20 years later to Knud Rasmussen, a Danish polar explorer and anthropologist.

In this version, Ava says his father the shaman went home and had a robe made in the style of the Ijirait, the caribou mountain spirit people, but with the addition of hands in the front to show that these creatures had attacked him.

There are a number of other variations of this story told by Inuit in Nunavut. One fact agreed upon by all experts is that the garment is considered sacred and merits further study.

5 replicas

In 1983, social anthropologist Bernard Saladin d'Anglure brought the shaman parka to the public's attention by commissioning three replicas in partnership with the community in Igloolik.

Saladin d'Anglure said he convinced Laval University, the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife to help with the cost of the project by each giving \$5,000 towards the re-creation of the garment.

The replica that headed to the Yellowknife museum was intended to be returned to Igloolik once a museum was built in the hamlet, said Saladin d'Anglure.

Teams of three to five seamstresses from Igloolik were employed to make each coat, including Martha Angugatiq Ungalaq.

"Angugatiq was the leader," said Saladin d'Anglure. "She was fantastic. She was known as the best seamstress."

Rhoda Ungalaq said she remembers seeing her mom work on replicating the parka.

"My mother was a very good designer and I think this was a special project for her," said Ungalaq. "She worked very hard on it."

Two additional versions of the garment were later made, one for the British Museum and another for a private collector who donated it to the Heard Museum of American Indian Art and History in Phoenix, Ariz.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/inuit-shaman-parka-design-history-1.3345968>

Aboriginal Identity & Representation

First Nations see new hope in social assistance fight

FRANCIS CAMPBELL TRURO BUREAU

Published December 1, 2015 - 9:42pm

Last Updated December 2, 2015 - 10:12am



Eskasoni Chief Leroy Denny said a new document has come to light that could help First Nations in their legal battle over social assistance rates.

The federal government failed to produce a key document that would have been a game-changer in the First Nations' social assistance case, says the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs and their lawyer.

"It's a really key document," said Naiomi Metallic, a lawyer with Burchells LLP in Halifax who has represented the assembly in its court battles concerning social assistance cuts. "In my view, it changes the analysis completely."

The federal department document, dated July 20, 1964, and filed as Circular 107, provides guidance to the regions in applying on-reserve assistance. It states that federal assistance was to be based on provincial rates and standards but that flexibility must be permitted in applying the provincial rules.

That's exactly what the assembly and chiefs from New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island argued during their legal fight that began in 2011 when the [Harper government signalled](#) it planned to align native social assistance with rates for non-native recipients.

In 2013, the Maritime chiefs won a legal battle that blocked the government from implementing its assistance-cutting proposal.

That decision was later overturned by the Federal Court of Appeal, which found Ottawa did have the right to implement proposed cuts unilaterally and without studying impacts.

In October, the Supreme Court of Canada [ruled it would not allow the assembly to appeal](#).

Changes to First Nations social assistance rates are expected to take effect in April, so Metallic has already started in motion arguments buoyed by the recently resuscitated Circular 107.

"I wrote to the lawyers involved from the other side," she said. "I have instructions from my client to make this better, to fix it."

Metallic said she can't say if federal officials intentionally withheld Circular 107 or if it was an oversight. But she maintains the new Liberal regime, with its talk about commitment to partnership, co-operation and renewal in dealing with indigenous affairs, could turn things around.

"My reading of the rules is that parties can agree to reverse or set aside decisions that they are not happy with anymore," Metallic said of the proposed native social assistance changes. Then it would have to go to a judge for approval. Failing such an agreement, Metallic said she's prepared to take a legal fight back to the Federal Court of Appeal and on to the Supreme Court of Canada.

“They are going to have to chew on it and think on it,” she said of the federal lawyers. “I’ll give them a timeline of a couple of weeks. In the meantime, we’ll hope for the best and prepare for the worst.”

The Appeal Court decision to overturn the chiefs’ 2013 win was based on the premise that Ottawa required strict application of provincial social assistance rules and that the federal department had always followed that course.

Circular 107, confirms the opposite, Metallic said.

“Circular 107 appears to be fatal to the reasoning of the Federal Court of Appeal and the position taken by the government throughout the case,” she said. “It means flexibility and adaptation of provincial rules was the prevailing departmental policy and any break away from this, which the changes proposed under the Harper government clearly were, trigger legal duties on the part of the government, including the duty to meaningfully consult and study impacts before making drastic changes.”

Eskasoni Chief Leroy Denny, lead chief of the social portfolio for the assembly, said the government has to make this right.

“Collectively, the Maritime First Nations have spent a lot of time and money to bring this case to court when it’s now clear that Canada had options other than forcing our people into greater poverty,” Denny said in an assembly release. He had earlier said the cuts would include the removal of housing and utilities subsidies and the clawback of the National Child Benefit.

Direct Link: <http://thechronicleherald.ca/novascotia/1325290-first-nations-see-new-hope-in-social-assistance-fight>

Aboriginal Jobs & Labour

Nunavut language authority underspends, stalls on mandate

Another GN body falls victim to chronic staff shortages, MLAs hear

STEVE DUCHARME, November 27, 2015 - 8:15 am



Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit chair Mary Thompson, left, and the organization's new executive director Jeela Palluq-Cloutier following their appearance Nov. 25 before the Nunavut legislature's Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts. Like many Nunavut government bodies, the IUT has struggled with staff retention and with fulfilling their mandate. (PHOTO BY STEVE DUCHARME)

The folly of internal favoritism might explain why it's taken Nunavut's language authority so long to standardize and document Inuktitut terminology, MLAs learned Nov. 25.

Representatives of the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit language authority, appearing before the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts at the Nunavut legislature in Iqaluit, admitted they should make more efforts to look outside the capacity-starved organization when it comes to hiring new staff.

"In the future we plan to do job advertisements," said the newly-appointed Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit chair, Mary Thompson.

The statement came after a series of questions from Tununiq MLA Joe Enook who asked Thompson to clarify why the language authority did not advertise publicly for its vacant executive director position, as well as others, when it was already short-staffed.

This November, the board appointed Jeela Palluq-Cloutier as executive director on a three-year contract.

Palluq-Cloutier, a former language specialist and teacher who worked for Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, had left the organization to work on other projects — most notably at Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, where she helped with community consultations on a unified writing system for Inuktitut.

But during her absence, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit — already struggling with capacity challenges — chose to fill Palluq-Cloutier's position with a term employee under the assumption Palluq-Cloutier would return to her former job after her commitments with ITK were ended.

Because Palluq-Cloutier is returning to the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit in a different job, the organization must now seek or renegotiate a new contract.

“Before you assign someone who’s working somewhere already... did you advertise for this position to the people of Nunavut to see if there are any people in Nunavut interested in the executive director’s position?” Enook said.

“As a board member, we want to have people working there and progressing,” Thompson said

Thompson was then asked how many Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit positions were appointed through its board of directors without no public advertisement.

“Let me say this first: It’s not just your group that does this,” Enook said. “However, we’re only dealing with the IUT right now.

“In the documentation [Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit’s 2014-2015 annual report], what does it mean when it states that staff get appointed by the board. Do they get appointed before they advertise the position?” Enook said.

“Is there no chance for us to be part of your group unless you’re looking for me in particular?”

Thompson replied by saying the language authority has done that in the past.

“That has happened, to tell you the truth. There have been appointments. And as I stated earlier, we are just getting independent now as IUT. We’ve been working on that as the board,” Thompson said.

“We want to make sure that we have indeterminate, permanent members and not just casual workers... In the future we plan to do job advertisements, to do hiring.”

Enook reminded Thompson that her organization is publicly funded.

“If there is a job position, then all of the people of Nunavut should have an opportunity to try and get it,” Enook said.

“The jobs in your office are for Inuit, there should be people in Nunavut that are available if you advertise for these positions.”

According to its 2014-2015 annual report, the language authority spent almost twice as much on casual, short-term wages than expected: \$158,241, compared with a budgeted amount of \$88,000.

The same was true in 2013-2014 when, according to that year’s annual report, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit overspent on casual wages by 32 per cent.

In 2012-2013, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit spent \$190,169 on casual wages when it budgeted for none.

But casual wages and computer equipment are the only areas in which the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit ever overspends.

From 2013 to 2015, the language authority has consistently under-spent the budget it gets from the Government of Nunavut.

In 2015, the organization's available budget was \$2,176,000 — but it spent only \$1,567,633, about three-quarters of the total.

This lack of expenditures, as well as the slow rate of progress toward its current mandate of defining Inuktitut terminology, prompted the [closer examination](#) of the organization by the standing committee.

In its 2012-2013 annual report, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit projected the completion of a terminology database by early 2014. That deadline has lapsed.

And while some agencies have contacted the language authority for terminology assistance, the organization has yet to contact anyone themselves.

“Can you indicate how your agency promotes its role and services to departments, public agencies and other organizations in Nunavut?” asked Rankin Inlet-South MLA Alex Sammurtok.

“Currently we are using word-of-mouth. The government departments know we are available, but we know we have to do more promotional work to the people of Nunavut,” said Palluq-Cloutier.

The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit does not currently have a website.

The response seems to confirm earlier statements made by [Nunavut languages commissioner Sandra Inuitiq](#) during her appearance before the standing committee Nov. 24.

In that hearing, the commissioner reported capacity shortcomings in her own office as well as a general lack of understanding by Nunavummiut about the role of the language authority.

Iqaluit-Niaqunngu MLA Pat Angnakak, who chaired the committee hearing, said she expects to report recommendations from both hearings to the legislative assembly during the upcoming winter sitting.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut_language_authority_underspends_stalls_on_mandate/

City of Regina still trying to diversify its workforce

[Kerry Benjoe, Regina Leader-Post](#)

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The Treaty 4 flag in front of Regina's city hall beside the Canada Saskatchewan and Regina flags. Bryan Schlosser / Regina Leader-Post

The face of Regina may be changing — but that is not yet reflected in the city's employees.

Although, the total number of full-time city employees increased by 568 from 2012 to 2014 — only eight of those have self-declared as aboriginal.

According to the City of Regina, on Dec. 31, 2012 there were 1,164 full-time city employees and 129 self-declared as aboriginal. In 2013, there were 1,682 full-time employees and 130 self-declared as aboriginal. In 2014, there were 1,732 full-time city employees and 137 self declared as aboriginal.

“The numbers have not changes significantly,” said Debbie Brotheridge, human resources consultant for the city. “We have undertaken a number of initiatives to try and change those numbers.”

Some of those initiatives include attending career fairs in the city.

“We were the only employer who attended the First Nations University powwow with a career fair booth this year,” said Brotheridge. “It was very positive.”

In addition to attending career fairs, the city established the Aboriginal City Employee group in 2013.

“We are certainly trying to increase our profile within the organization,” said Brotheridge. “We had a memo that went out by our then-city manager to all city managers letting them know the executive committee was in support of our group. Certainly we hope to have that happen once there is a new city manager in place as well.”

She said a request for a full-time human resources diversity employee has been included in the 2016 budget.

“We don’t have an aboriginal employment strategy in place at this time, however we are hoping to have that in place,” said Brotheridge.

Of the 137 full-time aboriginal employees at the city, none are in senior management positions.

Lyle W. Daniels, labour development strategist for the Saskatchewan Building Trades Council, is not impressed with the numbers, but believes that can change with the right effort.

He said the city needs to create a committee comprised of community members to help guide the city when it comes to creating a strategy for the recruitment and retention of aboriginal employees.

City employees should reflect the community it serves and that includes increasing aboriginal employees and visible minorities at all levels, said Daniels.

“The city is not doing enough, it’s more than just putting up flags at City Hall,” said Daniels. “We need to have an established engagement strategy. We need to have an established aboriginal policy and what those entail and have something that’s workable for the City of Regina and it’s accepted not only by management but by the community.”

A real investment in diversity is needed and one employee in human resources is not enough, he said.

However he remains hopeful the city can change its current employee numbers.

“If a year from now, there’s still no change we need to have the community screaming at the council and the mayor to address this because this shouldn’t happen,” said Daniels.

According to the city, it increased its self declared visible minority employees from 81 in 2013 to 85 in 2014.

Direct Link: <http://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/city-of-regina-employees-work-still-needed-to-diversify>

Quebec Cree machine operator fighting for women's equal rights

'You belong at home where you should be raising your child,' Maureen Awashish says she heard from employers

By Betsy Longchap, Jaime Little, [CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 02, 2015 4:02 PM CT Last Updated: Dec 02, 2015 4:53 PM CT



Maureen Awashish, a Quebec Cree woman, says it's been a rocky road working as a heavy machine operator, but she wants to encourage other women to persevere and not give up on the trade. (submitted by Maureen Awashish)

Maureen Awashish knew she wanted to drive big machines when she first saw the oversized trucks moving mountains of dirt and gravel at the Troilus gold mine on her family's hunting territory near Mistissini in the 1990s.

She was the only Quebec Cree woman to complete a heavy machinery course at the mine in 2007. When Awashish started looking for work she realized it would be a rocky road.



'I never stopped calling the companies,' Maureen Awashish says. (submitted by Maureen Awashish)

"I used to get remarks like, 'You belong at home where you should be raising your child,'" she said.

Awashish said it was difficult to leave her young son while she completed training, but she bristled when people suggested she should have stayed home.

"Once in a while I would respond that it's not only the woman's job to raise their child, it's also the father's duty."

The workplace discrimination sometimes bothered her so much she considered taking legal action.

"I never stopped calling the companies," Awashish said. "I would be told, 'You're calling the wrong department' and they would give me the number to the kitchen."

'I want to fight for equal rights'

Over the eight years she's worked in the construction industry, Awashish has seen a lot more women take up the trade but she said they're often overlooked for the role of heavy machine operator and instead offered jobs seen as less demanding.

Awashish hopes her success story can help prompt change.

"I often heard the men telling me, 'You can't do this kind of work because you're a woman.' The more I heard this, the more I felt keen and very confident that I would be able to do this kind of work," Awashish said.

She said when her father, Sam Awashish, died in 2006 after falling through ice near the mine site, it was difficult for her to work at the mine but her brother encouraged her to continue.

Now Awashish drives a grader, pushing huge heaps of snow in her hometown of Mississauga.

"I want to fight for equal rights for women doing this kind of work," she says.



Maureen Awashish (third from left) with an otherwise all-male crew. Awashish drives a grader, pushing huge heaps of snow in her hometown of Mistissini. (submitted by Maureen Awashish)

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/cree-machine-operator-woman-1.3347501>

Aboriginal Politics

Mushkegowuk Council signs "historic" agreement with provincial government

By [Sarah Moore](#)

Sunday, November 29, 2015 8:32:18 EST PM



Grand Chief Jonathon Solomon, left, and Minister David Zimmer shake hands after the historic signing of the Treaty Table Memorandum of Understanding at the Ontario legislature on Thursday, Nov. 26. The MOU is the first of its kind under the province's Treaty engagement initiative and will serve as a framework to promote positive relationships between the area's First Nations Communities and the province.

The signing of a Treaty Table Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) last Thursday served as a milestone achievement toward a more effective partnership between the province and its First Nations communities.

Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs David Zimmer and the Mushkegowuk Council signed the agreement at Queen's Park in Toronto on Thursday, Nov. 26.

The MOU will provide a platform for the provincial government and the seven First Nations communities represented by the Mushkegowuk Council to work together on mutual priorities.

According to Mushkegowuk Grand Chief Jonathon Solomon, the MOU will act as an unprecedented opportunity to open up dialogue on issues such as health care, land resources, revenue sharing, governance, jurisdiction and consultations.

“I believe it was a historic moment,” he told The Daily Press. “I think our First Nations have been saying all along that we agreed to be partners and have a government-to-government relationship, that's what our elders believed the Treaty 9 to be, we agreed to share. That's the biggest opportunity that we have right now, that this door is opened — now it's up to the First Nations to step up to the plate and say, 'Let's talk.'”

While it is not a legally binding contract, the Ontario government sees the MOU as a critical tool that will be used to support improved social conditions and to provide greater economic opportunities to enable strong, sustainable, and self-sufficient communities within Mushkegowuk Council.

“We had been in discussions with Mushkegowuk Council on matters of mutual concern through a forum established in 2011,” said Flavia Mussio, Senior Media Relations and Issues Coordinator at the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs in an email. “The MOU, the first of its kind in the Province under Ontario’s treaty engagement strategy, is a natural culmination of those discussions and reflects Ontario’s whole-of-government, integrated and proactive approach to addressing Aboriginal concerns and issues.”

The MOU also “commits the parties to work together to enhance institutional capacity, including governance capacity,” she explained, which will help to “enable an effective and accountable system of government for Mushkegowuk based on the best principles of good governance and tradition.”

The agreement acts as a renewed Treaty relationship that will provide a venue for information sharing and issue resolution.

Solomon signed the agreement on behalf of the seven First Nations he represents as a commitment to further continue discussions on important Aboriginal issues.

The meetings under this agreement “are not negotiating sessions,” he stressed, and “any substantive decisions will need to have their own agreement in the future.”

“It's the First Nations that will be sitting across the table from the province talking about these things over a period of time,” the Grand Chief explained. “After the signing of this MOU, this is when the real work starts and the discussions will take place. What's next? There could be negotiations, but first we have to put everything on the table and have a dialogue with the province in regard to the many areas we want to talk about.”

Direct Link: <http://www.timminspress.com/2015/11/29/mushkegowuk-council-signs-historic-agreement-with-provincial-government>

Fort Smith Métis walk out of N.W.T. Métis Nation AGM

'The straw that broke the camel's back,' says Fort Smith Métis Council president of vote

By Curtis Mandeville, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 27, 2015 11:34 AM CT Last Updated: Nov 27, 2015 12:23 PM CT



During the N.W.T. Métis Nation's annual general meeting in Hay River on Nov. 21, the Fort Smith Métis Council walked out over narrowly passed resolution, leaving part of the room empty. (submitted)

A controversial resolution adopted by the N.W.T. Métis Nation forced the Fort Smith Métis Council to walk out of a meeting last week, highlighting the tension within the Métis Nation, which is still trying to finalize a land claim with the federal government.

During the N.W.T. Métis Nation's annual general meeting in Hay River on Nov. 21, a vote narrowly passed 19 to 18 in favour of excluding Métis from outside of the territory from the group.

Ken Hudson, president of the Fort Smith Métis Council, said the resolution was strategic to cut the local group's membership, which includes close relatives from Fort Fitzgerald, Alta.

"The straw that broke the camel's back," Hudson says of the vote.

He says the decision to walk was a culmination of ongoing issues between Fort Smith, Hay River, and Fort Resolution member groups of the N.W.T. Métis Nation, which is made up of members who can trace their ancestry in the Northwest Territories back to 1921.

At issue is how decision-making power and resources will be divided among the three groups after self governance and land claims are settled with the federal government.

Hudson says Fort Resolution and Hay River have wanted an equal number of votes, but he calls that undemocratic.

"To us, it's unacceptable because we represent 1,400 people in Fort Smith and there's less than 400 in [Fort Resolution] and Hay River."

Hudson says there are talks of dividing the money and land equally once their negotiations are finalized — something the local groups also disagree over.

"Any government that has a tail wagging the dog scenario where the smallest group of people get to rule is just unacceptable," Hudson says. "It's not a democratic way."

'Heartbreaking'

The president of the N.W.T. Métis Nation, Gary Bailey, says it was "heartbreaking" to see the Fort Smith group walk away from the meeting.

He says some of Hudson's concerns about voting, resources and land allocation could be better addressed if the federal government provided a breakdown of its offer to the N.W.T. Métis Nation.

Bailey wants to know if the offer includes money for members and land from outside of the territory.

"They haven't come up with the formula to why the offer is what it is," Bailey said. "Like how much land are you getting and how much cash. Is it based off of per capita? We don't know that."

Arthur Beck, the president of the Fort Resolution Métis, says the resolution was necessary. Beck says negotiations are for members North of the 60th parallel, and the Métis don't get money for negotiating for members from outside of the N.W.T.

Beck says proper enumeration is needed before the membership list is finalized.

"Enumeration has not been completed," Beck said. "Out of that 13 to 1,400 members we don't know how many [are] indigenous to the Northwest Territories prior to December 21, 1921."

The president of the Hay River Métis, Karen Lafferty, declined to comment on the matter, only saying that Fort Smith's concerns will be addressed as self-government talks and land claims negotiations move closer to being finalized.

Meeting next month

Hudson admits that, in the end, the resolution may not even impact Fort Smith's membership, as most of its members can trace their ancestry to the N.W.T. prior to 1921.

He also says they don't plan to leave the N.W.T. Métis Nation, but he says they need to come up with a better solution going forward.

Hudson plans on presenting some options at the main negotiating table with the federal and territorial governments next month in Edmonton.

"It just makes sense that more people require more money and more land for the betterment of our people," Hudson said. "In [Fort] Smith we're only protecting our interest."

The president of the Métis Nation also plans on attending the meetings.

"We are going to work these issues out and nobody's quit yet," Bailey says. "Our goal is to make history for Métis people. And make sure we get our agreement so we can move forward."

"We can't negotiate forever."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fort-smith-metis-walk-resolution-1.3340063>

Aboriginal Sports

Inuit group wants Edmonton Eskimos to change its name



Helmets belonging to members of the Edmonton Eskimos sit on the field during a team practice in Winnipeg, Man. Wednesday, Nov.,25, 2015. (THE CANADIAN PRESS/John Woods)

Bob Weber, The Canadian Press
Published Saturday, November 28, 2015 10:22AM CST

EDMONTON -- Canada's national Inuit organization says the storied Edmonton Eskimos Canadian Football League franchise should change its name.

"It isn't right for any team to be named after an ethnic group," said Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, which represents Canada's 60,000 Inuit.

"If anyone was to call me an Eskimo, I would be offended by that."

The term Eskimo is a relic of a past in which Inuit people had no control over their lives or even what they were called, said Obed.

"This is part of the past. It isn't part of the present and shouldn't be part of the future.

"I think it's time Inuit made the statement that it's not acceptable to use our people as mascots."

Although questions have been raised about the team's name before, Inuit groups have never joined that debate. Obed said now's the time -- especially with the team playing in this weekend's Grey Cup championship game in Winnipeg.

"With the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action fresh in our minds, all sectors of society should be contributing to the ongoing reconciliation," said Obed.

Justice Murray Sinclair, who headed the commission, said recently that it's time to get rid of indigenous mascots, which would never be tolerated if they targeted any other cultural group.

It's important to stand with other Aboriginal Peoples who have objected to sports teams using their names, Obed said.

"I recognize that there may be absolutely no ill will or disrespect intended. It still is a vestige of colonialism, of a different time where it was OK for Canadians to speak of Inuit as Eskimos," he said.

"There are a number of things that were OK in Canadian society that aren't any more, and this is one of them."

Eskimo team officials have consistently defused the issue by saying they have never had an official complaint. Neither team spokespeople nor league officials were immediately available for comment Friday.

The only Inuk to ever play for the Eskimos -- he suited up as a halfback in 1955 -- said he doesn't have a problem with the name.

"I think we should take pride in that," said Kiviaq, a lawyer known as David Ward before he fought a legal battle to use his original Inuit name. "I don't understand their argument."

Current Eskimo players were concentrating Friday on practice for the big game.

"I'd have to do a little more research," said Washington state native J.C. Sherritt, in his fifth season as a linebacker.

"I know the Redskins name back home is something that is constantly talked about and needed change.

"But when things like that happen, conversation is always a good thing. If we need to talk about it, we'll talk about it."

Obed, who played junior and university level hockey in the United States, said he understands sports fans are passionate about their teams and their history.

"The history can be the history. We don't have to apologize for believing and cheering and saying a name that is now not acceptable.

But times change, he said.

"We don't want to enjoy something on the backs of other people. As values in society change, sports values can change, too."

Teams no longer accept hazing as part of sports culture, he pointed out.

Although American Inuit continue to use the word Eskimo, Canada's northern people left that name behind at about the same time they began negotiating their land claim in the 1970s, Obed said.

"When we mobilized and decided to fight for our rights, we decided to use the word 'Inuit,' because that is our name.

"No other group of people has the right to tell us who we are and name us."

Direct Link: <http://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/inuit-group-wants-edmonton-eskimos-to-change-its-name-1.2678226>

Abitibi hockey association cracks down on racist jeers

White players allegedly used racial slurs to insult Cree players

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 28, 2015 10:11 AM ET Last Updated: Nov 28, 2015 10:11 AM ET



Minor league hockey players in Abitibi-Témiscamingue have been warned that racist comments won't be tolerated. (Radio-Canada)

The minor hockey association in Quebec's Abitibi-Témiscamingue region says it plans to crack down on racist comments about Cree players.

Hockey Abitibi-Témiscamingue has sent out a letter to members condemning racist comments during games.

President Christian Labbé says that white players made unacceptable comments to Cree players during some recent games,

"In 2015, those kind of comments have no place whatsoever," he said.

Labbé says the association does not have the evidence required to discipline the players. Instead, the association sent the letter to remind teams and league officials that racism will not be tolerated.

Charlie Washipadamo is the Cree representative for the league. He says the problem has been an ongoing issue and is something he dealt with when he was a player.

"Hockey Abitibi is doing a good move because I know all the members pretty well at this point and I know they mean well by trying to address this issue before it gets out of hand," he said.

Around 3,600 youths play with Hockey Abitibi-Témiscamingue. Nine of the 18 associations under the league's umbrella are of Cree origin.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/abitibi-hockey-racist-comments-cree-players-1.3341615>

Former Eskimo who took Grey Cup to Nunavut thinks name change a good gesture

'We have to honour the aboriginal communities': Andre Talbot travelled with the Grey Cup to Nunavut in 2012

By Rob Drinkwater, The Canadian Press Posted: Nov 29, 2015 11:16 AM CT Last Updated: Nov 29, 2015 11:16 AM CT



Edmonton Eskimos' Andre Talbot, top, loses his shoe as he jumps over B.C. Lions' Davis Sanchez in 2010. Talbot, now retired, thinks it's time for the Edmonton football team to change its name. (The Canadian Press)

A former Edmonton Eskimo who once visited Nunavut with the Grey Cup says it's time to respect that the team's name is considered offensive to aboriginals.

"We have to honour the aboriginal communities of our great country and respect the fact that the name is deemed offensive and oppressive to these communities," Andre Talbot said from Toronto, where the retired 2004 Grey Cup champion played for the Argonauts but spent his final season in 2010 with Edmonton.

"Sports organizations need to be community building organizations. And if we're isolating and offending part of that community, then our particular organization or league is not doing its job."

In 2012, Talbot was part of a 100th anniversary tour of the Grey Cup that stopped in Iqaluit, and the trip involved more than just posing for pictures with the trophy. For two days, Talbot visited community centres and spoke with youth, answering their questions and even playing touch football with them.

He learned the region faces high rates of depression, suicide and diabetes. He called it a huge wakeup for someone who hasn't been around aboriginal communities that much, noting their concerns are sometimes forgotten by other Canadians.

Changing the Eskimos team name, Talbot said, would be a small, but positive gesture.

"It's an opportunity to just show that we do care, we are listening and we are willing to evolve," said Talbot, who now operates a yoga and movement-based studio.

The president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, which represents Canada's 60,000 Inuit, [said Friday that it isn't right for any team to be named after an ethnic group](#).

Natan Obed called the term Eskimo is a relic of a past in which Inuit people had no control over their lives or even what they were called. He said he would be offended if someone called him Eskimo.

Eskimo team officials have consistently defused the issue by saying they have never had an official complaint.

There's been vigorous debate over the use of ethnic mascots, particularly aboriginal-themed ones, for sports teams. Perhaps the biggest controversy swirls around the Washington Redskins in the National Football League.

Talbot said if Canadian organizations like Edmonton take the lead and change, maybe other organizations in the U.S. will follow.

"Our job is listen to people, to hear what they're saying and recognize that this type of language or use of image just needs to change. For me it's a simple solution," Talbot said.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/former-eskimo-who-took-grey-cup-to-nunavut-thinks-name-change-a-good-gesture-1.3342461>

New national Inuit president marks his territory

Ditch the name, Obed tells Edmonton Eskimos football club

JIM BELL, November 30, 2015 - 8:05 am



Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, said Nov. 26 that Inuit want a new relationship with the Crown, but not a "nation-to-nation" relationship. The next day he told the owners of the Edmonton Eskimos football team to find a new name — because their current name is outdated and a derogatory term. (PHOTO BY JIM BELL)



Samantha Kigutaq-Metcalf, left, and Cailyn DeGrandpre perform Nov. 26 on Parliament Hill at ITK President Natan Obed's meet-the-president event. (PHOTO BY JIM BELL)



An invited audience of MPs, diplomats, Hill staffers and Inuit leaders applauds a performance by Nunavut Sivuniksavut dancers at a meet-the-president event that Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami organized at Parliament Hill Nov. 26. (PHOTO BY JIM BELL)

OTTAWA — In two big statements last week, Natan Obed sent out unequivocal signals about what he plans to do over the next three years with the presidency of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

In the first, a meet-the-president event on Parliament Hill Nov. 26, he told the federal government what Inuit want and what they don't want: a renewed Inuit-Crown relationship — but not a "nation-to-nation" relationship.

“For Inuit, it’s an Inuit-to-Crown relationship. I would feel funny if I said that I want a renewed nation-to-nation relationship with the Government of Canada, because Inuit are proud Canadians,” Obed said Nov. 26 before an invited audience of Hill staffers, MPs, diplomats, and Inuit leaders.

“That’s something that we say whenever we can, that we want to be seen as a part of Canada, but also to be Inuit in Canada on our own terms, with our own identity.”

That’s consistent with the line taken by all other ITK presidents before him, such the late Jose Kusugak, who in 2004 said, “Inuit are more than First Canadians, Inuit are Canadians first.”

And it stands in contrast to the Assembly of First Nations, and most other First Nations organizations, for whom the term “nation-to-nation” is a routine piece of political discourse.

In his other big statement, however, Obed aligned himself with other Aboriginal leaders across North America who for years have campaigned against the use of Aboriginal names and mascots in professional sports — names like the Cleveland Indians and the Washington Redskins.

A widely discussed [op-ed piece published Nov. 27 in the Globe and Mail](#) calls on the Edmonton Eskimos football team to change their name.

“The name is an enduring relic of colonial power. That force enabled Indigenous identity to be appropriated and redefined as a branding tool for non-Indigenous entertainment, during a time when our children were taken from us, our lands were being developed without our consent, and we were being moved around as human flagpoles for Canadian Arctic sovereignty,” he said.

Obed also said the use of the name “Eskimos” is not well-meaning or harmless.

“I reject any arguments that the name is benign and has positive intent to align the Edmonton football team culture with Inuit strength or spirit,” he said.

Though it’s still used in Alaska and, occasionally in the western Arctic, in the eastern Arctic the term “Eskimos” fell out of use in the early 1970s and is now considered derogatory.

But that hasn’t stopped Inuit birthright corporations — closely associated with ITK’s Inuvialuit and Nunavut member organizations — from doing business with the Edmonton Eskimos football team.

In June 2013, the Inuit-owned Canadian North airline bragged in its marketing material about becoming the “official carrier” of the Edmonton Eskimos.

At that time, the airline was owned on a 50-50 basis through Norterra, by Nunavut's Nunasi Corp. and the Inuvialuit Development Corp.

"Canadian North is a proud partner of the Edmonton Eskimos," a page on the airline's website still says.

As for the new Inuit-Crown relationship that Obed seeks to build, he said that relationship should include:

- an Inuit-specific education system;
- safeguarding, promoting and re-vitalizing the Inuit language;
- action on mental health issues, and suicide prevention;
- implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls for action; and,
- action on murdered or missing indigenous women.

"These are all things that we can do as Canadians and as Inuit," Obed said.

And he also said he wants to foster Inuit unity across the country.

"I want to bring a new level of participation and co-operation for Inuit across Canada," he said.

This week, Obed will head to Labrador to take part in the Nunatsiavut government's 10th anniversary.

Obed won the ITK presidency this past Sept. 17, at [the organization's general meeting in Cambridge Bay](#).

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674new_national_inuit_president_marks_his_territory/

Edmonton Eskimos have reached out to Canada's national Inuit organization: Mayor Iveson

By [Kevin Maimann](#), Edmonton Sun

First posted: Monday, November 30, 2015 02:37 PM MST | Updated: Monday, November 30, 2015 02:51 PM MST



The Eskimos signature jersey is intended to reflect the team's history, says CEO Len Rhodes, while playing up the EE logo that does well with the young demographic. (supplied Eskimos)

Mayor Don Iveson says the Edmonton Eskimos have reached out to Canada's national Inuit organization regarding the controversial team name.

Iveson, a lifelong Eskimos fan, sported a green-and-gold tie after returning in the wee hours of the morning from celebrating the team's Sunday Grey Cup victory in Winnipeg.

He said the team's invitation to meet with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami is an "appropriate next step" now that the season is done, though he does not know if a date has been set for the meeting.

"When a national organization that speaks for Inuit people steps forward, that has to be taken very seriously. And I believe the team is taking it seriously," Iveson said.

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami president Natan Obed said last week that the Eskimos name is derogatory and symbolizes Canada's colonial policies.

Meanwhile, some residents have called for a return of Edmonton's old City of Champions signs after the Eskimos' first cup win in 10 years.

Iveson said there is no need to resurrect the signs.

"We've heard lots of that. And I completely understand that. And the city still is the city of champions, whether it says it on the signs or not," he said.

"Just as much as we're the gateway to the north, we're a festival city -- the problem is you can't fit all the great things a city is onto a single sign without leaving something out."

As part of a bet with Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson, Iveson will donate his weight in food to Ottawa's food bank, and Watson will wear an Eskimos jersey to work one day this week.

Direct Link: <http://www.edmontonsun.com/2015/11/30/edmonton-eskimos-have-reached-out-to-canadas-national-inuit-organization-mayor-iveson>

Political correctness comes to Canadian Football

By [Marc Montgomery](#) | english@rcinet.ca

Monday 30 November, 2015 ,

It was an exciting 103rd Grey Cup matchup between Canada's east and west Canadian Football League (CFL) champions. After the scoring went back and forth keeping fans on edge, the west's Edmonton Eskimos finally prevailed over the east's Ottawa Redblacks to take the cup. The final score 26-20 for the Eskimos.

However, the exposure once again brought the issue of sports clubs names back to the fore.

Some people and groups, including Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami president Natan Obed want the Edmonton team to change its name. Obed says the word "Eskimo" is outdated and derogatory.

Speaking to CBC he said, "I don't think there's room for indigenous people to be used as sports mascots". He adds, he does not believe anyone has done anything wrong in the past, but feels it's time for a dialogue on the name moving forward.



Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami president Natan Obed says the word Eskimo is outdated and derogatory © CBC

He says the name is a vestige of colonialism and a period when there were several things that were OK in society, but aren't anymore, "and this is one of them".

Various sources claim the word "eskimo" is a word from the Cree First Nation word meaning "people who eat raw meat", while another interpretation says it means "people who wear snowshoes".

The northern peoples of Canada have been formally calling themselves Inuit..the people, since about 1970, although American aboriginals in Alaska still use the word Eskimo.

The issue has sparked a interesting debate in online forums. While some say the name is offensive to Inuit, several other people claiming to be Inuit say they have no problem with the name, and that the new ITK president should occupy himself with more important issues facing northern Inuit.

In 2014, the US Patent and Trademark office decided to revoke the trademarks of the Washington Redskins football team of the American NFL, saying the name was “disparaging” to Native Americans.

Also in [2014, a junior football team in Ottawa, the Nepean Redskins](#), gave in to pressure and a human rights complaint and changed their name. They are now known as the Ottawa Eagles.

David Ward played for the team in 1955. A lawyer, he fought a legal battle to use his Inuit name “Kaviaq”. He is quoted by the Canadian Press saying he has no problem with the name. Speaking of those who want a name change he said “”I think we should take pride in that. I don’t understand their argument.”

Various teams have used the name Edmonton Eskimos as far back as 1895, while the Canadian Football Team was created only in 1945.

The club’s mascots are a polar bear (Nanook) and an angry football (Punter).

Team officials said they have never had an official complaint about the name, but replied to CBC saying they would be willing to discuss the issue sometime after the Grey Cup which was on Sunday.

Direct Link: <http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2015/11/30/political-correctness-comes-to-the-canadian-football-league/>

David Staples: Some Inuit are proud Edmonton football team called Eskimos

[David Staples, Edmonton Journal](#)

Published on: December 1, 2015 | Last Updated: December 1, 2015 5:40 PM MST



Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson raises his arms in celebration beside the Grey Cup in front of thousands of fans during a celebration rally at Churchill Square in downtown Edmonton on December 1, 2015. The Edmonton Eskimos won the CFL Grey Cup Championship by defeating the Ottawa Redblacks. Larry Wong / Edmonton Journal

Don't get rid of the name Edmonton Eskimos.

That's not just me saying that. That's Inuit saying it.

Many of them don't see the name as an insult, but as an honour, even if that's not the message coming from Natan Obed, the new president of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), Canada's national Inuit organization.

Obed argues it's time to axe the Eskimos name for Edmonton's football team. "The word Eskimo is not only outdated, it is now largely considered a derogatory term," he wrote in the Globe & Mail last week.

"The CFL football team does not honour our culture, our history, our present, or our future. The name is an enduring relic of colonial power. That force enabled Indigenous identity to be appropriated and redefined as a branding tool for non-Indigenous entertainment, during a time when our children were taken from us, our lands were being developed without our consent, and we were being moved around as human flagpoles for Canadian Arctic sovereignty."

So should we follow [Obed's advice](#)?

Obed was elected president by the 13-member ITK board, which represents 60,000 Inuit, but when his views were reported by CBC Nunavut, it quickly became clear many Inuit profoundly disagree with Obed. [Of the 26 people \(the vast majority of them Inuit\) who commented in a CBC Nunavut Facebook discussion](#), only one agreed with Obed. Of

course, a Facebook discussion doesn't make for a scientific poll or a plebiscite, but it does make me question how widely Obed consulted.

One Facebook comment came from the former mayor of Cambridge Bay, Michelle Gillis, 35, whose mother is Inuit and father white: "Edm Eskimos have always been our team! ... Keep your name."

In an interview, Gillis, 35, tells me Obed doesn't speak for the majority in her town. "We weren't consulted on the issue.

"We've all been very proud of the team being called Edmonton Eskimos ... I'm honoured and almost humbled. To me, I see it as Inuit or Eskimos being resilient, very strong and courageous and those are traits you would see in a football player."

Inuit elders, including her own mother, have always referred to themselves as Eskimos, Gillis says. "It was never used as derogatory term ... It's not something that's bad to us."

The Inuit often used descriptive terms to name other groups of people, such as calling white people "kabloona," a reference to big eyebrows, Gillis says. The term Eskimo is in the same vein, meaning "eater of raw meat," which is what the Inuit have done for centuries.

Such names were never meant as racist epithets, she says.

"We need to step back and not be so overly sensitive and point the fingers at everyone else," Gillis says.

Another Facebook comment came from Leonard Pameolik Netser, 52, a trapper in Coral Harbour: "Honor us by keeping the name! We are Eskimos. Only a few handful dislike the name. The vast majority of us like it."

Those who are against the term Eskimos don't understand their own language and the history of how these names evolved, Netser tells me. He personally sees Eskimo as a cool name for the team. "Everybody likes the name. It's us. Every Inuk I know that watches football, their favourite team is the Edmonton Eskimos."

Another Facebook comment came from Charles Pokiak, 50, a Tuktoyaktuk hunter: "Proud to be an Edmonton Eskimo Fan, one of the best names in sports. Edmonton Eskimos represent the name with pride and dignity."

Pokiak says no offence was ever meant by the Eskimos team taking the name and none should be taken. "There's no racism there in my book."

"Eaters of raw meat is what we are," adds Pokiak, who grew up on the land with his grandparents. "Anybody that calls me an eater of raw meat, I'm just proud of it."

So, yes, the name is archaic, but it also binds Edmontonians together with the Inuit, two groups who have long shared a life in a cold corner of the world.

Most crucially, what I'm reading and hearing is that the name Eskimo was never applied to the Inuit as an insult, nor was it taken that way, even as some see it that way now. The name was certainly not adopted by the Eskimos team to insult the Inuit, and for numerous decades now many Inuit have been proud the football team is called the Eskimos.

We hear a lot about honouring native oral tradition and respecting the wishes of the native elders. We should heed that now and keep the old name.

Direct Link: <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/insight/david-staples-some-inuit-are-proud-edmonton-football-team-called-eskimos>

Edmonton Eskimos CEO wants dialogue with Inuit after call for team name change

[Daniel Stilwell](#)

December 02, 2015 05:16 pm



The Edmonton Eskimos are facing a call for a name change after an editorial from an Ottawa newspaper claims the name is disrespectful to Canada's Inuit.

Speaking on 630CHED's Ryan Jespersen Show, Edmonton Eskimos president and CEO Len Rhodes says this isn't the first time they've heard the idea.

"This comes and goes certainly when there's events south of the border," says Rhodes. "It's not even comparable when people put us in the same conversation as teams like the Washington Redskins."

Rhodes says the team is always listening to its community.

“We are among the most progressive teams that exist in the world, certainly in North America, and we never look at race, gender, and we are so open minded about anything and everything.”

Rhodes says the team has reached out to a group representing Canada’s Inuit, but as of Wednesday morning, has yet to hear back. (*djs*)

Direct Link: <http://www.newstalk770.com/syn/110/78480/eskimos-ceo>

Natan Obed: why the name “Edmonton Eskimos” harms Inuit

“The colonial legacy of naming is about power and control”

SPECIAL TO NUNATSIAQ NEWS, December 02, 2015 - 4:00 pm



ITK President Natan Obed shares a smile with Nunavut Sivuniksavut students at an event in Ottawa last week. (FILE PHOTO)

NATAN OBED

President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

I am determined to achieve greater Inuit unity in order to mobilize against our continued colonization and together fight for equity in Canada.

We can connect and support each other across Inuit Nunangat in so many ways that were not possible in the past to achieve a better future, yet sometimes we are less inclined than we might believe to be supportive of one another or less able to achieve unity on important issues than we might believe.

Our overarching culture, language and identity may have the same foundation but our different political and colonial histories can influence the way we see the world, the way we see ourselves, and the way we treat each other.

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami has demanded that the Edmonton Canadian Football League team stop using the moniker “Eskimos” as part of an ongoing fight against colonization in the name of reconciliation. This stance has been supported by many Inuit, although I fully understand and appreciate that not all Inuit view the term as offensive.

The colonial legacy of naming is about power and control. The issue of Inuit being used as a sports team mascot matters, because this is the way this legacy continues to play out in popular culture.

This issue is about our right to self-determine who we are on our own terms. We are not mascots or emblems.

In a time when we still struggle to be heard, where there is vast indifference to our socio-economic condition, where we still fight for acceptance and respect from Canadians every day, dominant society continues to use us, a minority Indigenous people, as their mascots for their sports entertainment.

Allowing this practice is a fundamental departure from how we wish to be treated in all other conversations we have with Canada.

Consider the legacy of naming in our experience. In the past, non-Inuit imposed their own names onto our lands and bodies in place of centuries-old Inuktitut ones. Inuktitut place names were systematically substituted for English names that then became part of the basis for Canadian land ownership.

The Inuit land claims movement was in large part a fight to remain visible on our own terms at a time when our place names, history and society were literally being wiped off the Canadian map. At the same time, Government of Canada initiatives imposed serial numbers and dog tags onto our people instead of recognizing traditional, given names.

The response by Canadians to my stance against the use of the name “Eskimos” reflects how Inuit and the issues we care about are often viewed. Some have spoken out in support of our right to self-determination, and for that I am most grateful. A vocal minority used the opportunity to express hatred towards us, while the majority simply said this issue does not matter.

Sadly, the majority of responses showed us once again that when we speak, our voice means absolutely nothing. True reconciliation at the national level will only be possible when the federal government, media, and all Canadians do not feel they have a right to decide on their terms, whether or not the Inuit-specific issues we raise are legitimate or not before engaging in a path to resolution.

This is why we need unity. I believe that we can stand and fight together and support one another even on Inuit issues that some individuals may not have a negative personal association with.

In the beginning of the residential school lawsuit discussions, some Inuit stated they did not have traumatic residential school experiences; some Inuit felt that their education through residential schooling allowed them to be successful in life.

If those Inuit, many of whom were the most successful in our society, had decided that because they were not negatively affected personally then they would fight against the lawsuit, we would have not been included in the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, the Truth and Reconciliation process, or any of the health supports that have been offered to date for all Inuit residential school survivors. Unity won.

So for all my fellow Inuit who are not offended, please consider that many Inuit are offended by the term. Many Inuit do not want to be mascots. We cannot divorce this particular issue from our colonial relationship with Canada.

I ask that we stand together across Inuit Nunangat and say, for the good of Inuit in Canada, we will combat colonization while supporting healing, reconciliation, and mutual respect in all its varied forms. I will continue to do all I can to work toward this goal.

Direct Link:

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674natan obed why the name edmonton eskimos harms inuit/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674natan_obed_why_the_name_edmonton_eskimos_harms_inuit/)

Edmonton football club wants to meet with national Inuit org

"We would love to see that happen, sooner rather than later"

STEVE DUCHARME, December 03, 2015 - 1:20 pm



Members of the Edmonton Eskimos arrive home after winning the Grey Cup. The aircraft they used is chartered from the Inuit-owned Canadian North airline, which in 2013 billed itself as "a proud partner of the Edmonton Eskimos." At that time Canadian North, through Norterra, was owned 50-50 by Nunasi Corp. of Nunavut and the Inuvialuit Development Corp. The Inuvialuit now own 100 per cent of the company. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE EDMONTON ESKIMOS)

Discussions between the Edmonton Eskimos football club and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, which has demanded that the Edmonton team change its name, remain still at a preliminary stage and the two organizations have not yet held a face-to-face meeting, a team spokesperson said Dec. 2.

“We’ve reached out to ITK. We take this very seriously. We take our name, our brand, very seriously. We take what Mr. Obed had to say very seriously,” said Allan Watts, vice president of marketing and communication for the Edmonton Eskimos.

“These things are always better if you do them, organize a meeting face-to-face, and we would love to see that happen, sooner rather than later.”

ITK President Natan Obed published an op-ed in the *Globe and Mail* Nov. 27 calling on the Canadian Football League team to end its use of the word “Eskimos” in its name.

The article appeared two days before the football team went on to beat the Ottawa Redblacks in the 103rd Grey Cup final in Winnipeg.

And on Dec. 2, Obed gave *Nunatsiaq News* a [second statement that explains his position to Inuit](#).

“The colonial legacy of naming is about power and control. The issue of Inuit being used as a sports team mascot matters, because this is the way this legacy continues to play out in popular culture,” Obed said in his release.

While both organizations have confirmed reaching out to one another to arrange a meeting, no direct discussion between the Edmonton team and ITK has taken place.

ITK has acknowledged it sent private correspondence to the football team on Dec. 1.

The confirmation seems to contradict suggestions by local Edmonton media in recent days that a conversation between the organizations already occurred.

According to Watts, communication between the football club and the City of Edmonton on the issue is strong.

“[Edmonton] mayor Don Iveson was with us at the Grey Cup. He was with us yesterday. He was one of the speakers at the [Grey Cup] reception. We’re in touch with his office all the time. He takes these kinds of things very seriously as well,” he said.

“I don’t mean to speak on behalf of him, but I can tell you that when we are talking directly to him.”

A member of the official Canadian delegation to the United Nations climate change conference in Paris, Obed is now at the [COP 21](#), which runs until Dec. 11.

“We have every intention of reaching out and we’re really hoping we can get together with Natan, because that obviously and clearly is the right thing to do. So we’ll continue to try and do that,” Watts said.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiagonline.ca/stories/article/65674edmonton_football_club_wants_to_meet_with_national_inuit_org/

Valid argument put forth at convenient time

Published on December 03, 2015

The Grey Cup game has come and gone for another year and so has Natan Obed's 15 minutes of fame.



Obed is the president of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Canada's national Inuit organization, which is home to some 60,000 Canadian Inuit.

Never heard of Mr. Obed? Conveniently, he picked a time when a swarm of media from across the country would be assembled in one city - this past weekend it was in Winnipeg - for him to step aboard his soapbox.

Mr. Obed piggybacked the CFL championship game and the national audience it attracted to voice his displeasure with the nickname used by the Edmonton franchise.

Conveniently, Edmonton captured a Grey Cup championship with a win over the Ottawa Redblacks on Sunday, a game that was viewed nationally in this country, as well as on a national feed in the U.S.

"I call on all media to stop using the term Eskimos in your reporting so as to respect Inuit," Obed wrote in an open letter. "I also call on all owners or sports groups that still use Indigenous peoples as mascots - the Cleveland Indians, the Washington Redskins, to just name a few. To these organizations: The time is now to be on the right side of history. Change your name."

"Let's do our part in the world of sports to help move away from all dehumanizing and disrespectful legacies of the past and move towards true and lasting reconciliation. Indigenous people and our cultures deserve to be treated with dignity, equality and respect just as much on the field of play as anywhere else in 2015."

Obed also wrote, "The word Eskimo is not only outdated, it is now largely considered a derogatory term."

He went on to write, "The CFL football team does not honour our culture, our history, our present, or our future."

Obed raises a valid point and one that deserves attention. However, the timing of Obed's request is both convenient and hallow.

Obed was elected president on Sept. 17. Edmonton played just two days after he was sworn in, yet there was no word from Obed then. If there was a strong opposition and concern with Edmonton using an offensive nickname then, why not step forward that day?

We hear pleas from organizations like this every so often, usually when the team in question is playing in a big game and is certain to draw a national and international audience.

For example, American Indians a few years ago voiced their disgust for the Redskins nickname with the NFL's Washington franchise. Leaders said the Redskins name was a derogatory and insensitive name and demanded it be changed along with the team logo. It was also suggested that fans boycott games that involved the Washington team until a change in nicknames was made.

A similar attempt at a nickname change was brought forth when the Cleveland Indians last clinched a Major League Baseball playoff berth in 2013. As we know, neither the Washington nor Cleveland franchise has changed its nickname.

Closer to home, we saw a nickname swapped for something more appropriate. Upon request from the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, the University of North Dakota in 2012 changed its athletics team nickname from Fighting Sioux to Fighting Hawks. In addition, the Indian head logo was replaced with a more neutral graphic of a fierce-looking bird.

This was a move that was made away from the public spotlight, with the request from Indian leaders not coming on the eve of a team's national championship game.

If folks like Natan Obed and others who share his concern over an inappropriate nickname, it would be wise to continue the momentum of this crusade well into the CFL off-season. There would be no need to use an internationally televised game to help prop up the fight for a name change.

Direct Link: <http://www.mjtimes.sk.ca/section/2015-12-03/article-4364228/Valid-argument-put-forth-at-convenient-time/1>

Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources

AFN's Perry Bellegarde to attend climate change talks in Paris

The Canadian Press Posted: Nov 26, 2015 6:12 PM CT Last Updated: Nov 26, 2015 6:12 PM CT



Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde during a September news conference in Ottawa. (Fred Chartrand/The Canadian Press)

The Canadian delegation headed to Paris for climate change talks will include Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde — a move the aboriginal leader sees as significant.

"When did that happen historically? That's never happened," Bellegarde said Thursday. "We're going to build upon that openness."

'We pretty much have to be there.' - *Perry Bellegarde*

Bellegarde, who was invited to the conference by Environment Minister Catherine McKenna, said the new Liberal government is working to build a more respectful relationship with First Nations.

"It's a whole new shift," he said. "We want to build upon the positive energy that exists so that indigenous peoples are involved in every shape and form when any policy and-or legislation is being developed that impacts on our people and impacts on our rights."

'We still hunt, we still fish'

It is critical for indigenous people to be part of the conversation on climate change, Bellegarde added.

"We pretty much have to be there ... we are really the first to experience the impacts of climate change," he said.

"Our people still are of the land and of the water ... we still hunt, we still fish, we still trap, we still gather medicines ... the indigenous peoples, we say we have rights ... but we also have responsibilities as protectors and stewards of the land and water."

In a statement Thursday, McKenna said climate change is a collective responsibility and that the federal government is committed to reaching an ambitious global agreement.

"At home, we will ensure national leadership, join with the provinces and territories to take action on climate change, put a price on carbon and reduce carbon pollution," McKenna said.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who will also attend the Paris conference, has promised to work out a national climate change strategy with the premiers 90 days after the summit.

Bellegarde said he has not received an invitation to the followup meeting with the premiers but he plans on asking for one.

"I think that would send a strong message to the world, to other nation states, when they see Canada fully involving indigenous peoples, jointly developing strategies and plans and programs going forward, jointly working on the appropriate target," he said.

On Monday, Trudeau said he was pleased to see a united commitment to fight climate change following a meeting with provincial and territorial leaders.

"It is clear that the way forward for Canada will be in a solution that resembles Canada, that is shared values and a shared desire for outcomes and different approaches to achieve those outcomes right across this great country," Trudeau said.

Bellegarde said his organization will continue to push Canada for full inclusion.

"We've got to push nation states for recognition of rights and title," he said.

The national chief also said First Nations understand the need to strike the right balance between development and environmental protection — [a concern raised this week by Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall](#).

"There's ... the understanding that, in the long term, there is only one environment ... so you really have to continually work towards that balance," Bellegarde said.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/afn-s-perry-bellegarde-to-attend-climate-change-talks-in-paris-1.3339108>

Indigenous leaders, activists in Paris for climate change talks

AFN national chief Bellegarde calls COP21 an opportunity to influence Canada, world leaders

By Tim Fontaine, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 30, 2015 4:16 PM ET Last Updated: Nov 30, 2015 4:20 PM ET



National Chief Perry Bellegarde poses with U.S. President Barack Obama in a photo snapped by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the Paris Climate Change Summit. (Perry Bellegarde)

Indigenous peoples have joined world leaders and environmental advocates at COP21, the global climate change summit under way just outside Paris.

"I feel like we have a seat at the table," says Assembly of First Nations national Chief Perry Bellegarde, who is part of Canada's official delegation to the summit.

The national chief also had a brief encounter with U.S. President Barack Obama, captured in a photograph taken by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Photo ops aside, Bellegarde is taking part in meetings of the summit's indigenous caucus, which includes indigenous leaders from around the world.

He's also had the opportunity to speak with Canadian premiers and federal officials who are in attendance.

Bellegarde said indigenous people could help shape Canada's environmental policies and

guide society's move toward renewable energy and green technology, which are in tune with indigenous philosophies of caring for the earth.

"[Indigenous peoples] are a vital part of the solution, even though we have not been part of the problem," Bellegarde says.

There's also a coterie of indigenous environmental activists in France for the summit, including Erica Violet Lee. The Cree student from University of Saskatchewan is part of a group called the Canadian Youth Delegation.

Lee created a bit of a stir when she posted a photograph on Twitter, showing her making a face with Saskatchewan premier Brad Wall in the background.

Lee defended the move on Facebook.

"I don't have a chance in hell at taking on the power, privilege, and resources of governments and corporations," she wrote. "But because I am privileged enough to be here, I will fight not to be invisible, using the few pathways available to me."

Outside the summit, indigenous activists have already gathered and are trying to have their voices heard too. This could prove tricky, since there's actually a ban on protests in the wake of the Paris attacks.

One of the largest and most organized groups, the Indigenous Environmental Network, has already held a sunrise ceremony on the streets of Paris and the group is planning more events and demonstrations during COP21.

The Paris talks officially kick off today and run until December 11. Prime Minister Trudeau has promised to work out a national climate change strategy with the Canadian premiers 90 days after the summit.

"Now the work begins, after COP21, devising that strategy going forward," Bellegarde said, and "working with the federal government, provincial governments and indigenous leaders to do that in a comprehensive and collaborative basis."

"I want to ensure that indigenous voices are at that table," Bellegarde said.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/indigenous-leaders-activist-paris-climate-talks-1.3343927>

BC Hydro's Site C hardly a done deal as Ottawa reviews First Nations issues

[Mark Hume](#)

VANCOUVER — The Globe and Mail

Published Sunday, Nov. 29, 2015 9:38PM EST

Last updated Sunday, Nov. 29, 2015 10:38PM EST

With work already under way on the banks where the dam is to be built, it might seem as if Site C is a done deal.

Premier Christy Clark certainly hopes so. She views the start of the \$9-billion project as one of her two greatest accomplishments (the other being an agreement in principle with Petronas for proposed development of an \$11-billion LNG plant).

But despite all the activity by contractors building access roads and clearing land for work camps, tunnels and dam foundations, BC Hydro's Site C project could yet be brought to a halt.

NDP Leader John Horgan recently signalled that if his party wins the provincial election in 2017, it might abandon the controversial project. But the courts – or the federal government – could stall it before then.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has not, like Mr. Horgan, taken a stand against Site C. But he has promised to pursue a new relationship with First Nations.

In mandate letters to his new cabinet ministers, Mr. Trudeau stressed the importance of consultation and engagement with aboriginal communities.

“No relationship is more important to me and to Canada than the one with Indigenous Peoples. It is time for a renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership,” he wrote.

In his mandate letter to Jody Wilson-Raybould, the first aboriginal person ever appointed justice minister, he calls for a review of the federal government's litigation strategy.

“This should include early decisions to end appeals or positions that are not consistent with our commitments, the Charter [of Rights and Freedoms] or our values,” Mr. Trudeau wrote.

One of the things Ms. Wilson-Raybould will now have to review is the federal government's opposition to a Federal Court challenge by First Nations to Ottawa's approval of the Site C project.

Treaty 8 First Nations say Site C infringes treaty rights and that consultation was inadequate. They lost in the first stage at Federal Court, but are appealing.

Chief Roland Willson of the West Moberly First Nations and Chief Lynette Tsakoza of the Prophet River First Nation recently wrote a letter on the subject to Mr. Trudeau, Ms. Wilson-Raybould and several other cabinet ministers.

“Canada has to date actively opposed our appeal,” the chiefs wrote. “Under your present mandate, we would expect Canada’s position on this appeal to be reconsidered.”

The chiefs wrote that if Mr. Trudeau is serious about rebuilding relationships with First Nations, he should start in the Peace, where native people fear the Site C reservoir will destroy their way of life.

“The Peace River Valley is an environmentally and culturally unique ecosystem to which the Treaty No. 8 First Nations are deeply connected both culturally and spiritually,” they wrote. “This is the last stretch of the Peace River Valley we have left, as over 70% of the valley has already been transformed into vast reservoirs [by two existing BC Hydro dams].”

The chiefs note the Peace region has already been heavily affected by 16,267 oil and gas well sites, 358 square kilometres of pipeline right of ways and more than 5,000 square kilometres of existing or planned logging.

“The previous government’s position that major development projects such as the Site C dam can be approved in an area heavily impacted by hydroelectric and heavy industrial development without the decision maker even turning its mind to whether the project infringes Treaty rights and the constitution does not fit within your mandate and cannot continue,” they wrote.

On Dec. 8, Mr. Willson and Ms. Tsakoza will be in Ottawa for an Assembly of First Nations conference.

They hope to meet several cabinet ministers to argue that drowning sacred sites and flooding hunting grounds is no way for one government to show respect for another. If Mr. Trudeau agrees, Site C could come in for renewed environmental scrutiny and possibly be stalled. And if the courts rule treaty rights have been infringed, it might be stopped.

BC Hydro has already spent \$423-million on the project. So the stakes are huge.

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/bc-hydros-site-c-hardly-a-done-deal-as-ottawa-reviews-first-nations-issues/article27523822/>

Thousands march in Ottawa for ‘climate solutions and climate justice’



APTN National News

OTTAWA – Without Mother Earth there is no life.

That was the message in Ottawa where thousands gathered – joining many more across the world – in what was to be an international day of action on climate change Sunday on the eve of the United Nations climate summit in Paris, France.

“We stand together today for one important reason and that is to save, to protect and respect Mother Earth and the water,” Claudette Commanda told the large crowd in front of City Hall on Laurier Street. “For without Mother Earth, who is the mother for all people, we do not have life.”

The list of speakers also included the likes of environmental activist David Suzuki.



The purpose of the gathering was to urge Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his new government to get Canada 100 per cent reliable on renewable energy like wind, solar and hydro. They also called for the end of investing in fossil fuels.

Trudeau is in Paris to take part in the international summit on climate change, along with his cabinet ministers and Canada’s premiers. Assembly of First Nations Perry Bellegarde is there, as well, along with other Indigenous people representing the grassroots.

Many marchers in Ottawa wore green to represent renewable energy with hundreds busing in from out of town on what was a cold and cloudy Sunday afternoon.

The march stretched to nearly a kilometre beginning at City Hall with organizers estimating 25,000 making their way up Elgin Street, pausing for a minute of silence at the National War Memorial, down to Sussex Drive and looping around United States embassy before making their way to Parliament Hill.

Georgie Horton-Baptiste came from the Peterborough, Ont. area and said she did so for those who couldn't.

Police shutdown roads for marchers and there didn't appear to be any incidents, unlike in Paris.

Meanwhile, in Vancouver demonstrators added their voices to a crescendo around the world demanding swift and concrete climate-change action from world leaders gathered in Paris for the United Nations climate talks.

Thousands of people packed the shaded square outside the Vancouver Art Gallery on a sunny Sunday afternoon before marching through the city's downtown core.

"What you're seeing here today is a massive display of community spirit," said Ruth Walmsley on Sunday, a Vancouver Quaker and one of the event's organizers.

"We're here to send a very loud and clear message that we need immediate and meaningful action to be taken to address the climate crisis."

Those demands include an end to subsidies for fossil fuels and large-scale investment in renewable energy, she said.

"This is the 21st conference of the climate summits and we have yet to see the kind of action that we really need to address the crisis that we're in," Walmsley added.

"Honestly, I think that the only way that change is going to happen is if enough people take to the streets and demand it."

The event attracted an assortment of attendees advocating a smorgasbord of different causes, from combating open-pen fish farms to endorsing alternative energy, and from supporting protection for endangered species to opposing pipeline expansion.

The event was co-ordinated by a network of more than 70 organizations from across the Lower Mainland, including First Nations, faith groups and environmental associations.

Squamish First Nation Chief Ian Campbell stressed the need to work together in the battle against climate change.

“Bringing in traditional Indigenous views into that discussion I think is important for the values that First Nations bring around stewardship of the land and long-term planning around resource extraction and development.”

Speaking from Paris, Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson echoed the importance of citizen engagement in a message to the crowds assembled in his city and across the country.

“Keep your voices strong and make sure we hold all levels of government accountable to taking action on climate change,” he said.

“We’re seeing real leadership at a grassroots level and a business level that needs to be enabled by government.”

– with files from The Canadian Press

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/11/29/thousands-march-in-ottawa-for-climate-solutions-and-climate-justice/>

Inuit leaders in Paris attempt to raise Arctic issues at COP21

“We must now, collectively, work together to find solutions,” ITK's Natan Obed says

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, December 01, 2015 - 11:30 am



You can watch what's happening in Paris where the COP21 climate change talks are taking place on live webcasts. (PHOTO COURTESY OF UNEP)



The Arctic caucus members from the Inuit Circumpolar Council and the Saami Council meet in Paris Nov. 30, while watching the arrival of attendees arriving to COP21. The ICC, with Saami from Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, is leading the Arctic indigenous delegation. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SAAMI COUNCIL)

When world leaders opened the COP21 climate change conference Nov. 30 in Paris, Inuit who listened closely included leaders like Natan Obed, the president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

After attending the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Nunatsiavut land claims agreement in Nain, Obed heads to Paris Dec. 2.

There, Obed will take part in Canada's official delegation to the United Nations climate change talks, which will "decide the very future of the planet," French President François Hollande said Nov. 30 in his opening remarks.

During COP21, the 21st annual meeting of the nation states that make up the UN Framework on Climate Change, more than 40,000 diplomats and delegates from 195 nations will try to craft a global agreement to limit the average global temperature rise to two degrees Celsius by the year 2100.

"We must now, collectively, work together to find solutions to not only mitigate the further progression and impacts of climate change, but to provide support to those who are already facing direct and significant impacts," Obed said in a Nov. 30 ITK release.

"Paris is a key climate summit, and I will be focused on contributing to Canada's presence by working on creating positive outcomes for the Arctic, which in turn will benefit all nations."

The vice president of Inuit Circumpolar Council-Canada, Herb Nakimayak, is also a member of the official Canadian delegation, along with Nunavut Premier Peter Taptuna and Nunavut MP Hunter Tootoo, the federal fisheries minister.

The joint [Arctic peoples delegation to Paris, headed by ICC's international chair, Okalik Egeesiak, holds observer status at COP 21](#) — which means its members won't participate in the actual negotiations.

But the Arctic delegation will lobby leaders and delegates to support a commitment to limit the average global temperature rise to 2 C by the year 2100 through a binding agreement to cut climate-warming greenhouse gas emissions.

Egeesiak, who met Nov. 30 with U.S. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and Canada's climate change minister Catherine McKenna, also plans to meet Dec. 2 with Hollande to talk with him about ICC's call to curb the world's rising temperatures.

In the Arctic, a two-degree rise in average global temperatures would still see Arctic temperatures increase by at least 3 C to 6 C higher by 2100.

So Inuit want to see “enhanced measures to stabilize greenhouse gas” so that the global temperature rise remains at 1.5 C.

Inuit also want to see support for Inuit adaptation and mitigation efforts, the use of Inuit knowledge in evidence-based decision making, and the creation of a global financing mechanism to support indigenous peoples, including Inuit, to monitor and combat climate change.

The ICC delegation includes Inuit leaders and youth representatives from three of the four Inuit regions: Maatali Okalik, president of the National Inuit Youth Council, Cathy Towtongie, the president of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Reginald Joule, the former mayor of the Northwest Arctic Borough, Alaska, Lene Kielsen Holm of ICC Greenland, and Aili Liimakka Laue, also of ICC Greenland.

The Arctic delegation will participate in a Dec. 8 Arctic Day event and in the “Arctic Encounter Paris” conference, [a three-day event](#) whose speakers include Nunavut's premier, environment minister and NIYC President Okalik.

Arctic Encounter Paris 2015 is the only Arctic-related policy and economics side event to take place during the COP21, the event's website says.

More than 500 participants are expected at Arctic Encounter Paris, which will be the third largest COP21 side-event and third largest Arctic policy gathering of 2015.

If you're curious to see what's going on in Paris — and have the bandwidth to do that, you can listen in to webcasts from the Le Bourget conference centre [here](#).

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_leaders_in_paris_to_turn_cop21_attention_to_arctic_issues/

Trudeau says Indigenous people can teach the world how to care for the planet

[National News](#) | November 30, 2015 by [Brandi Morin](#)



Brandi Morin

APTN National News

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said during a speech in Paris that Indigenous people can teach the world how to care for the planet.

Trudeau was speaking Monday at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, also known as COP21, in Paris.

While outlining the principles on which Canada will base its climate action plan, Trudeau included a reference to the importance of working with Indigenous people.

He said Indigenous people are taking a leadership role on climate change and that Indigenous knowledge could be helpful in dealing with the issue.

“Indigenous peoples have known for thousands of years how to care for our planet,” said Trudeau. “The rest of us have a lot to learn and no time to waste.”

He also said the government will work with provincial and municipal leaders to create clean growth.

Trudeau invited premiers and environmental leaders to attend the event a few weeks ago.

Last Thursday, just four days before the start of the UN gathering, AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde said he accepted an invitation from environment minister Catherine McKenna to join Canada’s official delegation to COP21.

Bellegarde had already been scheduled to attend with the International Indian Treaty Council's North American Indigenous delegation which is funded by the United Nations Development Programme.

Outlining principles to take on climate change, Trudeau said Canada will act on advice based on scientific evidence and committed to providing funding to developing nations most affected by climate change.

He also expressed support for implementing policies that will contribute to the development of a low carbon economy, which will include carbon pricing.

"It's the right thing to do, for our environment, economy and as part of the global community."

He said climate change is more than a challenge, but an historic opportunity.

"An opportunity to build a sustainable economy based on clean technology, on green infrastructure and on green jobs. We will not sacrifice growth, we will create growth," he said.

Over 40,000 people from around the globe, including 150 world leaders, are gathered in Paris this week. COP21 is the largest environmental gathering in history where an international treaty is projected to be created to take steps to globally combat the threat of global warming.

Canada is warming at twice the global rate and the Arctic region is being hit the hardest, according to Environment Canada scientists.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/11/30/trudeau-says-indigenous-people-can-teach-how-to-care-for-the-planet/>

Saulteau First Nations supports wolf cull, chief says

[Jonny Wakefield](#) / Alaska Highway News
December 1, 2015 08:02 AM



Forestry and oil and gas development in the South Peace have opened up the backcountry with roads and clearings, making ideal hunting grounds for wolves. Photo By Mark Kent

The chief of Saulteau First Nations says he supports the B.C. government's controversial wolf cull, saying the program is needed to shore up declining moose and caribou populations.

The cull, which enters its second season this winter, will see around 200 wolves shot from helicopters in hopes of preserving dwindling caribou populations.

"Moose, caribou, everything is getting hammered by (wolves)," Saulteau Chief Nathan Parenteau told the Alaska Highway News at a signing ceremony with provincial government ministers Nov. 22.

Forestry and oil and gas development in the South Peace have opened up the backcountry with roads and clearings, making ideal hunting grounds for wolves. Right-of-ways and roads built for the Site C dam are expected to put even more pressures on ungulate populations in the region.

"Site C isn't even done yet," Parenteau said. "Oil and gas and forestry, and the access that's created for wolves, creating new roads and pathways for them to follow, it's allowed their populations to skyrocket.

"It's a matter of balance," he said. "We've put it into an area where it's unbalanced, now we have to bring that balance back. Part of that may be a cull."

Seventy-three wolves were killed in the first season, well below the target of 200. A ministry spokesperson said unseasonably light snow last year made it difficult to track the predators.

Critics say the cull doesn't address habitat loss, which they believe is the root of the problem. Singer Miley Cyrus emerged as one of the most visible opponents of the cull in September, when she made a well-publicized trip to the Great Bear Rain Forest. While there are no culls planned in that region, the conservation group that arranged the trip said the singer met with local First Nations opposed to the grizzly bear hunt.

At the event in Saulteau earlier this month, Forests Minister Steve Thomson called the cull one of his "more difficult decisions" as minister.

"We've had one year of the program, it's obviously a program you need to do over a long time period to fully assess it, and we're going to continue to do that," he said.

"It will be carrying on, supported by First Nations in the communities here," Thomson said. "They understand the importance of caribou to the landscape, and we needed to, as one of the tools in the tool box, to take that step."

Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Rustad added that a new relationship and reconciliation agreement with Saulteau gives the nation more power over habitat management.

At 1,000 members, Saulteau is the largest nation in the Treaty 8 Tribal Association.

- See more at: <http://www.alaskahighwaynews.ca/regional-news/saulteau-first-nations-supports-wolf-cull-chief-says-1.2123013#sthash.i87lEt9H.dpuf>

Inuit call for action at COP 21, want global warming limited to 1.5 C

ICC also wants money to help Arctic people adapt to climate change

JANE GEORGE, December 02, 2015 - 9:40 am



Okalik Eegeesiak, the chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, in the centre, talks Nov. 30 in Paris with other members of the joint Inuit-Saami delegation to COP21. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SAAMI COUNCIL)

The Inuit Circumpolar Council is calling on world leaders meeting in Paris this week to work towards a climate change agreement that will limit global temperatures to an increase of no more 1.5 C by 2100 and to find ways to cut the sources of Arctic warming.

But, no matter what global climate change pact is produced Dec. 11 at the end of the COP21 talks, the ICC also wants to make sure Inuit living in developed nations such as Canada gain access to international money to help them adapt to warmer Arctic temperatures.

That's the gist of the ICC position paper, called "Inuit Call for Action from Global Leaders," aimed at delegates attending the United Nations Framework on Climate

Change meetings — called COP 21, because it's the 21st time there's been such "a conference of the parties."

At the end of the day, money issues remain important at COP 21: many nations are expected to make big commitments to spend money on climate change adaptation in whatever agreement — binding or non-binding — emerges from the gathering of 40,000 delegates and diplomats from 195 nations.

The ICC wants money so "Arctic, Indigenous, and remote communities" have access to renewable energy options that will "increase our economic viability and decrease dependence on energy imports and outside resources."

The ICC also wants to see money earmarked to integrate traditional knowledge within scientific reports and money to allow Inuit to attend international climate meetings.

That was an issue at COP 21, where Norway paid the expenses of Inuit and Saami attending the conference as observers.

Okalik Egeesiak, the ICC chair and leader of the Arctic delegation with Saami, was to meet Dec. 2 with François Hollande, the president of France, the host country to COP 21, to deliver the position paper which she signed in syllabics.

"The ICC, as the international voice of Inuit, we respectfully call upon global leaders at the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP 21) in Paris, France to listen to, commit to support and act upon the climate issues and requests identified by the Inuit of the Arctic and other Indigenous peoples," the position paper reads.

The ICC's position paper urges global leaders "to support Inuit in sustaining our livelihoods" by recognizing the role of the Arctic in regulating the world's climate and taking "concrete action" to keep any increase in global temperatures below 1.5 C, and reduce the impact and amount of climate-warming soot, methane and emissions that enter the Arctic.

The ICC also seeks "sustainable funding" for:

- the integration of Inuit and Indigenous knowledge and local monitoring of regional and global environmental assessment processes and reports;
- community-based monitoring of environmental change and developing global databases to integrate local observations;
- participation of Inuit in climate change-related processes and programs at local, national, regional and international levels within such forums as the Adaptation Fund Board, which is expected, among other organizations, to hand out money;

The ICC also wants to see a Global Indigenous Peoples Fund, governed and managed by Indigenous peoples, which will provide “equal funding to Indigenous peoples,” including those from developed countries like Canada.

In its position paper, the ICC also calls on the international community to respect Inuit sovereignty, to acknowledge the important role of the Arctic Council “as a model for cooperation and collaboration” and to develop other decision-making forums that include Indigenous peoples as full participants.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_call_for_action_at_cop21/

Inuit, Saami leaders promote Arctic agenda at COP 21 Indigenous pavilion

“Indigenous peoples remain closely connected to the land in every region of the globe”

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, December 01, 2015 - 8:00 am



ICC President Okalik Eegeesiak speaks Nov. 30 — in Inuktitut— at the opening of the Indigenous pavilion at COP21 in Paris. (PHOTO COURTESY OF ICC)

“The health and well-being of Inuit and Saami are inextricably tied to the Arctic environment and, in particular, [to] the tundra, the marine environment and the snow and ice.”

That was the message delivered Nov. 30 by Okalik Eegeesiak, chairperson of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, at the grand opening of the [Indigenous Peoples Pavilion at the COP 21 climate change meeting in Paris.](#)

More than 40,000 diplomats and delegates will meet in Paris until Dec. 11 with the goal of reaching a global agreement to curb climate change.

And during COP 21 Eegeesiak and Aile Jávo, the president of the Saami Council, will co-chair the Arctic portion of the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change, open to all attending COP 21.

“Inuit and Saami are deeply concerned about the actual and potential impacts of climate change on their cultural, social and economic health and corresponding human rights,” Eegeesiak said in a Dec. 1 ICC news release.

“Indigenous peoples remain closely connected to the land in every region of the globe. We are hunters, fishers, agrarians. We live on the ice, snow, the tundra, on the coastlines, in the forests, mountains, deserts and savannas.”

There's reason to be concerned: in the Arctic, limiting average global temperatures to a two-degree rise — the goal of COP21's future pact — will still see Arctic temperatures increase by at least 3 C to 6 C higher by 2100.

Eegeesiak, who spoke in Inuktitut, thanked all Indigenous peoples in Paris who, “are here because we share a common concern.”

Those concerns include migration and relocation, ocean acidification and warming, sea level rise and extreme weather events as a result of climate change, she said.

“Government leaders, indigenous peoples, industry and NGOs [non-government organizations] must work together from the community level to the heads of state. Climate change does not divide us — it unites us — with a common goal to make certain all peoples can live in their homelands, support their children and leave the world a better place,” Eegeesiak said.

Eegeesiak was to meet Dec. 2 with the president of France, François Hollande, when, among other topics, she planned to discuss the [ICC's COP21 position paper](#).

Jávo, in her address to the forum, said activities such as reindeer herding, fishing, hunting and gathering remain important livelihoods for Saami, the Indigenous people, now spread between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia.

“The traditional livelihoods are fundamental for Saami culture and the only way of life for many Saami people,” Jávo said. “The Arctic, including traditional Saami territories, is facing more rapid and large scale changes than ever before.”

On Dec. 8, Arctic Day at the COP 21 Indigenous venue, Eegeesiak and Jávo will participate in a panel discussion with Inuit climate activist Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Cathy Towtongie, the president of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Reggie Joule, the former mayor of

Alaska's Northwest Borough, and Maatalii Okalik, the president of the National Inuit Youth Council.

Arctic Day will also include the screening of Saami and Inuit films, including "[The Last Yoik of the Saami Forests](#)" and Zacharias Kunuk's "[The Journals of Knud Rasmussen](#)."

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_saami_leaders_promote_arctic_agenda_at_cop21/

Mining exploration incentives hinted at by Northern Development minister

Mines minister Michael Gravelle promises details by the end of the year

[CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 02, 2015 8:53 AM ET Last Updated: Dec 02, 2015 8:53 AM ET



The Ontario Chamber of Commerce is pushing for more investment in the province's mining industry. (Noront Resources)

Ontario's minister of Northern Development and Mines is hinting at exploration incentives to be unveiled in the next few weeks.

Michael Gravelle made the comment while responding to [a mining report from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce](#) that called on the government to do more to encourage mining development in the province.

"I can say, I think, without getting myself in too much trouble, that our strategy will certainly be speaking to a number of the issues related to the need to drive exploration in the province of Ontario."

Gravelle wouldn't say what those changes might be, only promising they will be unveiled over the next few weeks.

"There's no question the mining sector is going through a challenging time," he told CBC News. "We went out there to consult with people about how could our renewed, revitalized mineral development strategy bring forward some recommendations to help stimulate the sector. Hopefully, when we do release this, which will be before the end of this year, you will see some of the fruits of that labour and those consultations coming to bear."

'The industry is having problems'

Porcupine Prospectors and Developers Association president Bill MacRae says the effect on the industry will depend on what the government's incentives are.

"If they're significant, then it's a step forward," he said. "We certainly, as an industry, have let them know loud and clear that the industry is having problems and Ontario is tending to fall behind in a jurisdiction that's seen as favourable for exploration."



Provincial Northern Development and Mines Minister Michael Gravelle is working on a revised mineral development strategy. (Jody Porter/CBC)

MacRae said he'd like to see a rebate on exploration funds and enhanced flow-through shares — and he wants the provincial government to take the lead with First Nations consultations.

He said junior companies "just don't have the resources to spend the time to go through the plans and permits processes and do the consultation and accommodation that is required for getting signoff on permits for First Nations."

Junior companies won't work in Ontario if it's too difficult, and several have said they'll leave, he said, without citing specific companies.

The chair of the board of directors for the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce says she's looking for a plan that keep things stable through recent struggles but also as the sector grows.

"We as a community have to notice that there are opportunities that we have to work for and not just wait as well," Karen Hourtovenko said.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/ontario-mining-chamber-commerce-1.3346642>

Inuit, environmentalists lobby for action at Paris climate conference

'We've given our voices and our faces to the issue of climate change,' says ITK president

By Sima Sahar Zerehi, [CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 03, 2015 4:00 AM CT Last Updated: Dec 03, 2015 8:40 AM CT



'As the ice melts and the passage becomes more open other countries are going to test our sovereignty over the Northwest Passage,' says Paul Crowley, director of WWF-Canada's Arctic Program. 'We'd be better off with a frozen Arctic.' (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

Inuit and environmental groups are at the climate change summit in Paris to warn against the the environmental, human and security threats of climate change and lobby for action.

The United Nations 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) started this week in Paris, bringing together indigenous and environmental groups from across the globe lobbying for decisive action on climate change that address both the environmental as well as the human cost of global warming.

"I think it's extremely important that the national leaders and the national governments know that the eyes of the people of the world are on them," said David Miller, president and CEO of World Wildlife Fund-Canada.

Miller has partnered with [Sheila Watt-Cloutier, an award-winning Inuit leader for her work on climate change](#), to speak about the impact of climate change on nature and the environment as well as the people in the Arctic.

The melting of sea ice will not only affect ice-dependent species but also the traditional Inuit way of life, said Miller.

"That's why we need to see strong action in Paris this year."

Inuit need to be 'recognized, respected, funded'

Leaders of several Inuit organizations are also in Paris to ensure that the needs of the people of the Arctic are on the agenda.



Okalik Egeesiak, chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, stands with French president François Hollande at COP21 in Paris. (submitted by Okalik Egeesiak)

Okalik Egeesiak, chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), is at the summit, and spoke at the opening of the indigenous pavilion.

"We're lobbying governments to ensure that Inuit and Saami people of the Arctic region are recognized, respected, funded, to participate at every level in climate change adaptation and mitigation," said Egeesiak.

She said it's been a challenge in the first few days of the summit to organize their lobbying efforts but added that their work with the Canadian government has been a success.

ICC and Cathy Towtongie, president of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the organization that oversees the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, had a "very positive" meeting with Catherine McKenna, Canada's Minister of Environment, said Egeesiak.

"The minister reiterated that [Canada supports the UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples](#) and working with us to try to sort out those types of phrases that are included in the agreement," said Eegeesiak.

'Voices and faces'

Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Canada's national Inuit organization, said it's a positive sign that the Minister of Environment asked him to be part of Canada's official delegation at COP21.

"We've given our voices and our faces to the issue of climate change in relation to the Arctic," said Obed.



Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, says 'We've given our voices, and our faces to the issue of climate change in relation to the Arctic.' (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

"We've been very vocal about the need to reduce and stabilize gas emissions and we have been talking quite a bit about the effects that we see in our homeland."

He said Inuit knowledge about the environment coupled with western science "can be very powerful when it comes to articulating the reason why we need to act, and act now, to combat climate change."

'Security blanket' on the planet

Paul Crowley, director of WWF-Canada's Arctic program in Iqaluit, said not addressing climate change could have repercussions for Arctic sovereignty and national security, a position that he also argued at the Conference Board of Canada's conference on [Climate Change, Security and Defence](#).

"In terms of military conflicts and reducing the chance of military conflicts, the Arctic plays a really important role as a security blanket to ensure that our climate is stable," said Crowley.

Crowley said that some research has linked the conflict in Syria to water issues that resulted from climate change. Some have made a similar connection to conflicts in Sudan and Somalia.

"Security is best found by keeping the planet stable," Crowley said, "and the Arctic plays an incredibly important role in keeping weather patterns, climate, oceans stable and therefore much more secure for the planet."

The melting of the Arctic can also threaten Canada's claim on Arctic sovereignty, he said, noting that ice-free waters could allow other countries "to test our sovereignty over the Northwest Passage."

For Crowley, success at COP21 would be for Canada to take leadership on lower greenhouse gas emissions.

"What I'd like to see is Canada be at the forefront of pushing for an eventual reduction of greenhouse gases that will keep us to 1.5 C," said Crowley.

Much of the wording for the Paris agreement will be finalized by the end of this week. After that, country-to-country negotiations will start. The summit will wrap up on Dec. 11.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/arctic-cop21-inuit-climate-change-1.3347753>

Exhibit examines environmental issues

By [Svjetlana Mlinarevic](#), Daily Herald-Tribune

Wednesday, December 2, 2015 5:58:41 MST PM



Edmonton artist Heather Shillinglaw discusses one of her pieces, Buffalo Corral, which portrays famous and influential Metis people in Canadian history and the ecological impact of industry and the loss of the

buffalo in the exhibit Buffalo Girl at the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie on Tuesday November 24, 2015 in Grande Prairie, Alta. Svjetlana Mlinarevic/Grande Prairie Daily Herald-Tribune/Postmedia Network

Art for Heather Shillinglaw is more than just paint on canvas - it's her culture and her activism.

The Edmonton artist's exhibition Buffalo Girl is currently on display at the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie with pieces touching on the artist's Métis culture and stance on environmental degradation by oil companies.

"Art can communicate a sustainable living through the environment and inspire the works from the landscape. As a Métis, in my culture, that's a big part of who I am as an artist as I look back to my ancestors to honour that," she said.

The pieces on display were created after Shillinglaw travelled with her husband through the Americas. Her trip and return to South America in later years would have a profound affect on her artwork, Fragments, which demonstrates the importance of flora for food, textiles, and woven goods. The artwork also was influenced by indigenous medicines and their applications in South American culture.

"It gave me a greater appreciation of medicinal plants that we have and respect for our environment," she said.

Shillinglaw's works are mixed media paintings and installations where she used fabric, text, beading, paint, and other elements to create three-dimensional pieces that pull the viewer into the artwork to explore small surprises that rest within the piece, while at the same time asking the viewer to step back and re-examine the work as a whole.

"When I make the paintings, I build up the surface, and as I build up the surface I think about the Impressionists and how they applied the paint - I apply objects and things within the landscape.

"And as you stand back from the painting there's all these layers that come to play and the image comes into focus. Then the wonderful thing happens where I hide all these little images inside of it and all these become a narrative of a deeper meaning of the work," she said.

There are three works that stand out in Shillinglaw's exhibit: Nohkom's Quilt, which means Grandmother's Quilt in Cree, a tribute to Shillinglaw's grandmothers; Buffalo Corral is an installation made from doors with murals on both sides which make an ecological statement and celebrates famous and influential Métis figures in history; and Whispers in the Forest, which examines the ecological affect of oil on forests near Cold Lake.

"My end goal is to get the conversation going... I want people to ask questions. I want them to be engaged with the work to see for themselves that there is this divine beauty that we don't want to destroy and it's our job to protect what's left," she said.

According to Todd Schaber, who curated Shillinglaw's Buffalo Girl exhibit, people are really enjoying her pieces and are walking away with an appreciation of indigenous art.

"I'm hoping that people will look at her work and pick out the different types of medias she's been working in, which is happening - people really seem to be engrossed," he said.

Buffalo Girl will run until Feb. 14, 2016.

Direct Link: <http://www.dailyheraldtribune.com/2015/12/02/exhibit-examines-environmental-issues>

Indigenous Peoples Know How to Care for Our Planet: Justin Trudeau at COP21

[ICTMN Staff](#)

12/3/15

What has seemed like a no-brainer to Indigenous Peoples for centuries has finally been uttered by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada at the COP21 talks in Paris.

"Indigenous peoples have known for thousands of years how to care for our planet," [Trudeau said in his speech](#) at the talks on the opening day, November 30. "The rest of us have a lot to learn. And no time to waste."

Also on hand was Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde, who along with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami President Natan Obed and Congress of Aboriginal Peoples National Chief Dwight Dorey is among the indigenous leaders who formed part of the delegation from Canada.

"I have been meeting the Canadian delegation, international delegates and Premiers at COP 21 to present a clear message that the rights of Indigenous peoples must be recognized in the final text of the treaty being negotiated here and all follow up actions," [Bellegarde said in his speech](#). "Our rights must be respected and protected. States must understand that giving life to Indigenous rights is the most effective way to combat climate change. When we have control over what happens in our traditional territories we will make decisions that are responsible and sustainable."

Bellegarde was one of four leaders representing Canada at the opening plenary, according to an AFN media release, alongside Trudeau, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Stéphane Dion.

Separately, Bellegarde addressed delegates on November 30 before the Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin) at an event that recognized "the global nature

of climate change and the spirit of solidarity and cooperation shared by Indigenous peoples worldwide,” the AFN said.

Trudeau vowed to “work with our provinces, territories, cities and indigenous leaders who are taking a leadership role on climate change” and “help the developing world tackle the challenges of climate change.”

“Canada is back, my good friends,” Trudeau said. “We are here to help.”

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/12/03/indigenous-peoples-know-how-care-our-planet-justin-trudeau-cop21-162643>

Canada’s Indigenous Bands Rise Up Against a Tar Sands Pipeline

TransCanada, the company behind the now-defunct Keystone XL, is proposing another pipeline that would ship Alberta tar sands oil to Canada’s Atlantic coast. But fierce opposition from First Nation communities could derail this controversial project.

by jim robbins, 03 Dec 2015: Report

Sitting in his office on the outskirts of Montreal, Serge Otis Simon, council chief of the Kanastake — a band of Mohawks — is clear about what might happen if the proposed [Energy East Pipeline](#) is routed through the band's land, in spite of their opposition. "The Warrior Society are men whose duty is given by creation to protect the land, people, and community," he told me, describing a group of Mohawks who go by that name. "I can't think of a more honorable way to be killed than standing in the way of that pipeline."

The rhetoric may be extreme, but it reflects the passions surrounding the debate over oil and gas pipelines in Canada. And it may well not be



350.org

Cree activist Clayton Thomas-Muller, shown at a Keystone XL protest last January, is organizing First Nations opposition to the Energy East Pipeline. hyperbole. The Kanastake, after all, are the First Nations band that rose in armed revolt against Quebec and the federal government in 1980 over a developer's efforts to build a golf course and condominium complex on a burial site in a sacred pine grove next to their reserve. The two-and-a-half month standoff ended when the Kanastake surrendered to police.

Now that President Obama has shot down the contentious Keystone XL Pipeline — which would have transported oil from the tar sands of northern Alberta to refineries on the U.S. Gulf Coast — the spotlight is turning to Energy East. Proposed by TransCanada, the same company behind Keystone XL, the Energy East Pipeline is the next most likely conduit for what is known as unconventional crude. It would run from Alberta nearly 3,000 miles east to ports in Atlantic Canada, snaking across territory claimed by some 150 First Nations groups.

The involvement of these First Nations bands in the Energy East battle may well be the trump card for pipeline opponents, which include

Involvement of First Nations bands in the Energy East battle may be the trump card for pipeline opponents.

Canadian and U.S. environmental groups. The bands have real leverage, claiming that TransCanada must secure their permission before building pipelines on their lands — a claim the company disputes. Some bands, like the Kanastake, have vowed to block the pipeline at all costs.

Opposition from First Nations communities is one of the main reasons why what was once considered the top prospect to carry tar sands crude — the [Northern Gateway Pipeline](#), proposed by Enbridge Inc. to travel from Alberta some 730 miles to a tanker port on Canada's West Coast — now appears to be moribund. The pipeline would have crossed the lands of more than 130 different First Nations, some of whom also promised armed resistance, and required oil tankers to navigate the ecologically sensitive and stormy Hecate Strait, a traditional First Nation fishing grounds.

The Energy East Pipeline is different from Keystone XL in one major respect — it's an all-Canada line, and needs no approval from an American president. The 42-inch-diameter pipeline, if built, would be one of the



NEB

The proposed route of the Energy East Pipeline, which would transport heavy crude oil from Alberta's tar sands nearly 3,000 miles to a port in St John, New Brunswick. largest by volume in North America, able to transport 1.1 million barrels of tar sands crude per day, nearly a third more oil than was proposed for Keystone. The pipeline would leave the oil tank farm of Hardisty, Alberta, head south, then quickly dog-leg to the east across Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick to tanker loading facilities and refineries in eastern Canada.

Most of Energy East would incorporate existing gas pipeline that will be "repurposed" to carry diluted bitumen, or dilbit, which is what producers call the molasses-like tar sands crude from northern Alberta. New pipeline would be constructed through the eastern half of Quebec and the Maritime provinces.

While it avoids a U.S. crossing, Energy East still has plenty of opposition, both inside and outside Canada, because it would provide a way for much larger amounts of the landlocked tar sands oil to find a way to export markets. This would likely mean an expansion of tar sands mining, although the recently elected premier of Alberta has announced a [sharp change of course in climate policy](#) from the previous conservative provincial government, including a limit on tar sands carbon emissions.

Many opponents say it's time to put an end to projects such as the tar sands and Energy East. "The endless expansion of the fossil fuel industry is the thing that makes the math of climate change impossible," climate activist Bill McKibben said. "And we're fighting that tooth and nail." His group, [350.org](#), is now taking on Energy East and is working with Clayton Thomas-Muller, a Cree from a northern Manitoba band, the Puktawagan. Thomas-Muller is organizing First Nations across Canada to fight Energy East and the tar sands.

Energy East would cross 961 separate bodies of water, including major rivers such as the St. Lawrence.

In addition to the large-scale CO2 emissions associated with the Energy East Pipeline, another major issue is the threat to the many streams and lakes it would cross. Canada has 20 percent of the world's freshwater, and Energy East would cross 961 separate bodies of

water, including major rivers such as the St. Lawrence and Rideau, according to the Council of Canadians, a national environmental group. TransCanada touts its high-tech leak-detection systems. But last summer a state-of-the-art-Nexen pipeline [ruptured and spilled a million gallons](#) of gooey, heavy crude into the boreal forest in northern Alberta, and the spill went undetected for two weeks.

If it gushes into a creek or lake, dilbit, much heavier than conventional crude, quickly sinks and is far harder to clean up. Five years after the spill of more than a million gallons in the Kalamazoo River from a pipeline rupture, thick deposits of dilbit still lie at the bottom, impossible to remove. The cleanup has already cost more than \$1 billion.

"Energy East goes right through Winnipeg — in fact, it goes right through Shoal Lake First Nations Territory," said Thomas-Muller. "Shoal Lake is the single largest source of water for the city of Winnipeg."

And while some of Energy East's pipeline is modern double-walled pipe, about 80 percent of the repurposed pipe is 40 years old and has a much thinner single wall, about the width of a pencil. Because of its viscosity, dilbit is pumped under more heat and pressure than conventional crude, and some critics contend it makes the pipe more susceptible to rupture, though [one U.S study says](#) that is not the case.

Moreover, opponents have raised questions about the chemicals mixed with the heavy crude to help it flow, called diluents. TransCanada won't reveal what diluents it uses, calling it proprietary information. But it's First Nations have been up against formidable opponents in their pipeline battles. likely that benzene, a known carcinogen, is one of them, experts say.

The opposition also is concerned about increased oil tanker traffic in the waters off eastern Canada. TransCanada just canceled plans for a loading facility near Riviere-du-Loup in Quebec because it would have been situated in beluga whale habitat. But as planned, the overall project would significantly increase tanker traffic in the Bay of Fundy, which has the highest tides in the world and is home to endangered northern right whales — one of seven whale species there — and a thriving commercial fishery.

In recent years, First Nations have been up against formidable opponents in their pipeline battles, especially the recently defeated Conservative government of Stephen Harper. "He rolled back much of Canada's environmental law," Thomas-Muller said. "But the one area they haven't been able to take away is the powerful legal regime of aboriginal law. That's why First Nations are at the forefront of this battle for civilization and the most successful environmental campaign in history."

Harper was also able to pass C-51, widely considered a draconian anti-terrorism bill, styled after the Patriot Act, which included in its definitions of terror anyone who interferes with "critical infrastructure" or the "economic and financial stability" of Canada.

The Conservatives were defeated in October elections, and that has changed the political landscape on energy development, though precisely how remains to be seen. The Liberal Party, which came to power, voted for C 51, but has said it will amend it. The new prime minister, Justin Trudeau, has struck a far more accommodating tone with environmental groups and, according to Serge Simon, "made significant overtures to First Nations."

Still, the oil industry remains one of Canada's largest economic sectors and it needs pipelines to export its product. Trudeau supported the Keystone XL Pipeline, but didn't weigh in on Energy East during the election campaign. In early November his foreign minister, Stéphane Dion signaled that the new government is behind Energy East — with caveats. "We support this," he told the Toronto Globe and Mail. "But we want it to be done properly, and it will be difficult to do if we don't strengthen the process... of communications with communities and the process of 'We'll do what we can to stop it,' one Mohawk leader says of the pipeline. 'The community doesn't want it.' scientific environmental assessment."

The area where the Energy East pipeline would pass through Kanastake territory is a beautiful region of provincial parks, rolling green hills, farms and orchards at the confluence of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers. It also would run along the Lake of Two Mountains, which, besides recreation, also provides drinking water to much of this part of Quebec.

Many officials in Quebec and Ontario have signaled their opposition to the pipeline, saying it's more trouble than it's worth. First Nations groups are especially riled about Energy East after losing the battle over pipeline 9b, an Enbridge gas line in Quebec that was built to carry light crude but will be used for heavy tar sands crude.

Another Mohawk band to the south of Montreal also is fighting Energy East. Clinton Phillips, who administers the land portfolio for this band, was raised a Catholic and attended a Catholic church in Kahnawake, built by Jesuits in 1656. As he walked through the church and looked at the stations of the cross, their titles written in Mohawk, he talked about how much it meant to him when Pope Francis issued his [encyclical on the environment](#) earlier this year. Coupled with the traditional aboriginal respect for the land, he said, "We'll do what we can stop it [the pipeline]. The community doesn't want it."

TransCanada is undeterred. "Pipelines are the safest and most efficient way to move products like oil, especially large volumes, over longer distances," TransCanada spokesman Davis Sheremata said in an email. "Everyone who transports products like oil wants to see it done safely and efficiently."

The First Nations of Canada are now emboldened. The price of oil has fallen precipitously, their archenemy Harper is gone, and the realization that the world is rapidly warming is growing. With October's dramatic election outcome, the Canadian energy battlefield has tilted in their favor. But none of the First Nation pipeline opponents believe the fight over Energy East is over.

"We're the doorway," said Simon. "If we stop it here it won't happen. So we'll continue fighting."

Direct Link:

http://e360.yale.edu/feature/canadas_indigenous_bands_rise_up_against_a_tar_sands_pipeline/2937/

Grassy Narrows First Nation marks 13 years as 'the voice of the forest'

Grassroots blockade against logging trucks north of Kenora, Ont. started on Dec. 2, 2002

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 03, 2015 8:47 AM ET Last Updated: Dec 03, 2015 8:47 AM ET



Grassy Narrows First Nation Deputy Chief Randy Fobister gives "great compliments" to the community organizers who have continued to turn away logging trucks since 2002. (freegrassy.net)

In the beginning, Randy Fobister of Grassy Narrows First Nation, in northwestern Ontario, disagreed with community members who were stopping logging trucks from entering their traditional territory, but 13 years later the deputy chief says "it's really important the blockade is still there."

A community gathering was held on Wednesday [to mark the anniversary of the blockade that started on Dec. 2, 2002.](#)

People continue to maintain the site and "protect the land", Fobister said, even as the community considers whether blockade is the appropriate term for what they're doing. He also balks at the word 'activism'.

"I think that word protectors, you know protectors of the land," is preferred," he said. "The forest doesn't have a voice, but First Nations people are the voice."

Fobister said in the early days he didn't understand why people were standing in the way of the logging trucks because he was so used to seeing the impact of forestry all around him.

"As I was growing up I noticed the [forested] areas that looked beautiful for as long as I can remember...they'd be gone," he said. "I thought that was normal.

"Thirteen years ago I became aware," he added, offering "great compliments to the grassroots people for starting this."

The work of community members to protect the land now has the support of the chief and council and has also raised awareness at government and industry levels, Fobister said.

Grassy Narrows' stand against industrial logging "is on the map already, government can't say 'we didn't know'," he said.

Ontario's most recent forest management plan includes clear cutting on the traditional territory of Grassy Narrows First Nation.

Fobister said the resistance to the province's plan will continue because "we need that forest — that's our identity."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/grassy-narrows-first-nation-marks-13-years-as-the-voice-of-the-forest-1.3347906>

Land Claims & Treaty Rights

Climate change consequences for people in Canada's Arctic deserves more attention, says researcher

Melting sea ice threatens the food security of people living Canada's northern communities, says researcher

By The Early Edition, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 26, 2015 3:00 PM PT Last Updated: Nov 26, 2015 5:29 PM PT



The sea ice acts as a highway for people living in the Arctic, and with it melting, many are finding themselves cut off from communities and food sources, says researcher Eric Solomon. (Philippe Morin/CBC)

The polar bear has become somewhat of an international symbol for the consequences of climate change but some researchers say more work needs to be done on how the disappearing sea ice affects people who call the Arctic home.

Climate change is changing the Arctic landscape faster than other regions — in fact the change is happening "almost 40 times faster than the models had predicted," said Eric Solomon, director of Arctic Programs at the Vancouver Aquarium.

Solomon said Canadians need to remember that their country is, ultimately, an Arctic country.

"The north is about 40 per cent of Canada's landmass, the arctic is 67 per cent of Canada's coastline. We're an Arctic country by just about any measure."

But people living in the south often forget that, he said. This sentiment has been echoed by those living in [Canada's northernmost communities](#) for years.

Sea ice highways

"People in the north really rely on sea ice. They use it as their highway," said Solomon, who worked in Canada's Far North for six years.

With the sea ice melting, people living in the Arctic can find themselves cut off from communities.

Think of it as if your commute was all of a sudden not possible anymore, said Solomon.

"You can imagine if the Lionsgate Bridge were down for some period of time, and you couldn't really get to where you needed to go. That's the kind of thing people are experiencing."

Solomon said the disappearance of sea ice is also a food security issue. The ice allows Inuit to hunt, which is important to both their diet as well as to their culture.

'We do hear a lot about polar bears...'



A polar bear wanders along the Hudson Bay. New research suggests that permafrost soils in Canada's Arctic are melting at a rate that will significantly speed up global warming. (iStock)

More work needs to be done on the effect climate change is having on the Inuit, said Solomon.

"We do hear a lot about polar bears, we don't so much about people and the impacts on people."

The Inuit have a lot to contribute to the science and research on the region as well, he said, noting his own experience speaking to an elder who worried his knowledge was losing its relevance.

"There's a tremendous amount of traditional knowledge that goes way back, many generations, about the north from direct experience and observation."

Solomon is giving a talk called [Life In A Changing Arctic](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/climate-change-inuit-1.3338870) at 7:00 p.m. PT Thursday, Nov. 26, at the Museum of Vancouver. Admission is by donation.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/climate-change-inuit-1.3338870>

First nations elders fighting for outside voices at NEB table

If for some reason this doesn't strike you as important, you might be asking yourself: How does this affect me?



Representatives of Enbridge and the National Energy Board listen to a drum group at Sagkeeng First Nation's Turtle Lodge as part of a day of ceremony knowledge sharing, as elders shared a statement regarding the Enbridge Line 3 replacement project.

By: [Shannon Van Raes](#) Metro Published on Sun Nov 29 2015

Monday, in a nondescript meeting room at a Winnipeg hotel, something is happening that could alter the future of energy projects in the province and Canada as a whole.

For months, a group of aboriginal elders have fought for their uncompromised voices to be heard at a hearing for a pipeline project lost amid names like “Keystone XL” and “Northern Gateway”.

Despite eclipsing those projects in size and scale, Enbridge’s Line 3 hasn’t garnered much in the way of public attention. Billed by Enbridge as a replacement project, it’s in fact an expansion project. The old pipeline will be decommissioned and left underground while a new larger pipeline is installed from Hardisty, Atla., to Superior, Wis.

The aboriginal elders have information and insight they believe could help guide Enbridge and the National Energy Board (NEB), but changes made by the previous federal government have severely curtailed their ability to participate in the NEB hearing process.

If for some reason this doesn’t strike you as important, you might be asking yourself: How does this affect me?

I’ll tell you.

Line 3 is a harbinger of things to come. If the NEB continues along the path it’s on, your voice, your neighbour’s voice, anyone who raises concern or questions regarding future energy projects or future pipelines will struggle to be heard as the NEB races to meet the ridiculous 15 month deadline set by the last Conservative government.

Winnipeg is not part of the Line 3 route, but it is on TransCanada’s proposed 4,600-kilometre Energy East pipeline — a mix of repurposed and new pipelines, passing through the same area as the Winnipeg aqueduct. Under the current NEB mandate the

approval process will rush ahead, limit interveners, cut short submissions, restrict their format and force stakeholders to present positions blindly by denying them adequate information and preparation time.

This is not about whether pipelines are good or bad, necessary or unnecessary. It about our rights as citizens to participate when our environment, our economy and even our place in the world hangs in the balance.

Energy companies need the legitimacy that comes with a fulsome and well respected regulatory approval process as much as interveners need to have their concerns heard, respected and considered.

Bringing us back to the aboriginal elders who are testifying at an NEB hearing in Winnipeg today. Their determination to speak in an uncompromised voice has brought the NEB's processes into the light and forced the door open for more reasonable consideration of interveners — albeit slightly — but it is a key move in the fight for a fair process, one that brings pressure to the new federal government to make to restore balance to the process.

And it's a move that Winnipeggers will appreciate all the more when it is our city's turn to try and find a seat at the NEB table.

Shannon VanRaes is a Winnipeg-based journalist and photojournalist who spends her days contributing to the Manitoba Co-operator and her nights covering urban affairs. She can be reached on Twitter @ShannonVanRaes.

Direct Link: <http://www.metronews.ca/views/winnipeg/urban-compass/2015/11/30/first-nations-elders-fighting-for-outside-voices-at-neb-table.html>

First Nations speak against oil pipeline expansion across Prairies

Enbridge Pipelines Inc. is planning a \$7.5 billion replacement and expansion of the pipeline

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 30, 2015 12:41 PM CT Last Updated: Nov 30, 2015 4:40 PM CT



Grand Chief Derek Nepinak of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, said his organization cannot support the Enbridge expansion plan due to a lack of consultation with treaty peoples. (Adrian Wyld/The Canadian Press)

A group of First Nations elders is speaking out against a proposal by Enbridge to expand a pipeline across the Prairies.

Derek Nepinak, grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, said his organization cannot support the plan due to a lack of consultation with treaty peoples.

"I think what's been absent from the discussion is a depth of consultation that recognizes who the original people from these lands are," Nepinak said as he, along with other elders and leaders, spoke at a National Energy Board meeting in Winnipeg on Monday.

Enbridge Pipelines Inc. is planning a \$7.5-billion replacement and expansion of its pipeline, which runs from Hardisty, Alta., across Saskatchewan and through Brandon and Gretna in Manitoba. The line continues into the U.S., running from Neche, North Dakota to Superior, Wisconsin.

"It's part of our ongoing maintenance and safety program at Enbridge," said Todd Nogier, a spokesperson with the company.

"We have sought regulatory approval to replace Line 3 to ensure its safe and reliable operation going forward."

Enbridge also wants to increase the line's capacity from 390,000 barrels a day to 760,000 barrels a day, but Nogier said it's not about expansion, it's about safety.

"With a new line, we would seek to restore the original capacity of the line ... For the last five years or so, we voluntarily and proactively reduced the throughput of the line to ensure its safe operation," he said.

"It will carry the same type of oil as it originally carried."

Enbridge is also facing opposition out west for another one of its projects, the Northern Gateway pipeline. The \$7-billion line would carry bitumen from Alberta's oilsands to B.C.'s coast, passing through 40 First Nations territories along its 1,177-kilometre path.

Eight First Nations, four environmental groups and one union group presented their challenges to the Federal Court of Appeal last month, trying to have Ottawa's approval of the controversial project revoked. A decision has not yet been made.

"As part of the project, we've been meeting with something like 150 First Nations from as far as 200 kilometres from the right of way, so our engagement program is very robust," said Nogier.

"We're working with the communities to ensure that they understand that the measures we're putting in place to decommission the line are intended to reduce impacts on the environment, to reduce impacts on the land."

'Not going to work until we come to some kind of agreement'

"It doesn't matter how opposed I am to things. It's not going to work until we come to some kind of agreement, some kind of understanding," said Henry Skywater, an elder with the Birdtail Sioux Dakota Nation.

"That's all it takes, is some kind of understanding."

Nepinak said he hopes concerned First Nations will see a "favourable outcome" after the new Liberal government reviews the company's plans.

"A favourable outcome doesn't mean for us necessarily that the application is approved or not. It represents a more inclusive process or an opportunity for reconciliation to exist within these types of spaces," he said.

"I think what's happened is these applications have come forward without us being given the opportunity to have a full and complete understanding of what the implications are of Line 3 replacement," he added.

"How can you agree to something that you don't know the full scope of the issue for? And I don't think anybody knows the full scope."

Darin Barter, a spokesperson for the NEB, said the consultation and information from elders is vital in the process, they are about two weeks away from hearing final arguments.

The board will hear oral traditional evidence this week and next week in Calgary.

"We want to hear from them. We want to understand what the traditions are, what the beliefs are. We want to gather their wisdom and knowledge and bring that forward in the hearing process," said Barter. "There's no decisions that have been made at this point. We

have to look at the scientific, the technical, the aboriginal evidence that has all been put forward to us."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/first-nations-speak-against-oil-pipeline-expansion-across-prairies-1.3343488>

Give top of Beacon Hill to First Nations: councillor

Bill Cleverley / Times Colonist
December 1, 2015 06:00 AM



Checkers Pavilion at the top of Beacon Hill in its heyday. Photograph By Via Hallmark Heritage Society

The top of Beacon Hill should be given back to First Nations and a traditional longhouse built there to replace the decaying Checkers Pavilion, says Victoria Coun. Marianne Alto.

Chiefs of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations are supporting her idea.

Alto said "a confluence of circumstances" has provided the city with an opportunity to fulfil a commitment to act on recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which investigated abuse of First Nations children at residential schools.

"It's just seemed that we had this opportunity to do something truly extraordinary," Alto said.

"The intent is for it to return to the First Nations, but to do so in a way where we all benefit from learning what was there and what could be there again."

Mayor Lisa Helps and Coun. Charlayne Thornton-Joe are supporting Alto's motion, which goes to council this week. It recommends the city return to the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations the top of Beacon Hill, and that the boarded-up Checkers Pavilion be removed and replaced with a longhouse, which would be used for First Nations cultural and educational activities.

The remaining \$32,000 in the city's strategic priorities fund should be used to remove the pavilion and to expedite the longhouse proposal, the motion says.

Alto said the city has already set aside the slope to the southeast of the hilltop — traditional lands of the Lekwungen people — for reburial of First Nations remains uncovered during public works excavations.

Esquimalt Nation Chief Andy Thomas says in a letter to council that if the site is prepared and the longhouse opened in 2017, it would coincide with Canada's 150th anniversary. That could "open a door to potential federal government funding set aside for such sesquicentennial observances."

Songhees Chief Ron Sam called the longhouse proposal "a bold demonstration" of the city's commitment to reconciliation. "Songhees Nation welcomes the opportunity to work with Esquimalt Nation and the city to recreate a First Nations longhouse on this ancient site in which our young people may learn and demonstrate traditional carving skills, and from which all people may learn and share the history and stories of our Nations," Sam says in a letter to council.

Friends of Beacon Hill Park chairman Roy Fletcher doesn't think the idea has been fully thought through. Removal of Checkers Pavilion would be fine, but the site is not appropriate for a longhouse, he said, noting it would involve removal of native plants.

His group prefers a small lookout with interpretive signs, including ones focusing on First Nations.

"But going all the way to a longhouse, that just doesn't sound reasonable to me," Fletcher said.

Alto said the city would not spend money beyond site preparation. "I guess the question that some people would ask is, 'Are we going to pay more money for this?' And the answer is: No it's not anticipated at this time," Alto said.

Returning the hilltop to local First Nations is a "tangible, powerful act of reconciliation," Alto said in her report to council. For thousands of years, the Beacon Hill area has been "a place of historical, cultural and sacred significance to the Esquimalt and Songhees peoples," she said.

"The Lekwungen people actively shaped the landscape in this area by cultivating camas and other native plants for food. Their land-management practices created open meadows admired by the arriving British."

Alto said the city would retain ownership but would enable perpetual use for a longhouse.

Alto said the longhouse would be about the same size as the pavilion, about 2,000 square feet, but more rectangular.

Beacon Hill Park was established by a provincial trust in 1882.

Fletcher said turning over land to First Nations might be “quite tricky” legally. “I don’t know if they’re proposing to put a trust on top of a trust.”

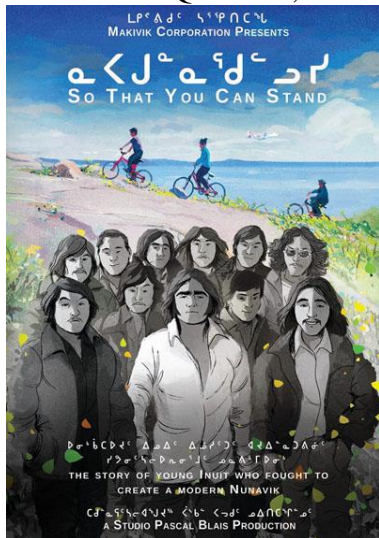
The Checkers Pavilion, where checkers used to be played, was completed in 1936 but has not been in use since the 1970s. In 1995, it was boarded up, considered unsafe to enter.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/news/local/give-top-of-beacon-hill-to-first-nations-councillor-1.2122887#sthash.15eaDrPb.dpuf>

Nunavik Inuit mourn the passing of a land claim negotiator

Greg Fisk died suddenly in Alaska

NUNATSIQA NEWS, December 02, 2015 - 1:15 pm



Makivik Corp. just released a documentary on the signing of the JBNQA, which featured interviews with negotiator Greg Fisk. Fisk died in his Juneau, Alaska home earlier this week. (FILE IMAGE)

Makivik Corp. is mourning the death of one of the negotiators of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Greg Fisk, an Alaskan consultant and politician, died at his home in Juneau, Alaska this week. He was 70 years old.

“I’m in shock,” said Senator Charlie Watt, who first met Fisk in the early 1970s.

“When I met Greg more than 40 years ago I saw a person who was motivated and not a submissive person,” Watt said. “He’s definitely in the history books of the Inuit of Nunavik.”

As president of Makivik’s predecessor, the Northern Quebec Inuit Association, Watt hired Fisk during a trip to Alaska to study the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in the early 1970s.

Fisk’s experience with the land claim as a consultant for Arctic fisheries made him a natural fit for the NQIA at the negotiating table.

Fisk’s death comes just weeks after the 40th anniversary of the signing of the JBNQA, and the release of Makivik-produced documentary on the land claim process.

Fisk actually flew to Montreal last summer to be interviewed in the film [Napagunnaqullusi](#), which was recently premiered in Kuujuaq and Montreal.

“Many of our youth are just learning about the trail blazers who negotiated our land claims agreement in 1975,” said Makivik president Jobie Tukkiapik in a Dec. 2 release.

“To hear one of the negotiators has died during this time is unexpected and we want his family in Alaska to know his legacy in Canada will live on.”

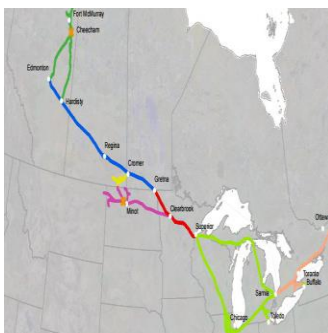
Fisk had only just been elected to serve as mayor of Juneau, when he was discovered dead in his home Nov. 30. His cause of death has yet to be determined.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavik_inuit_mourn_the_passing_of_a_land_claim_negotiator/

Manitoba chief wants AFN to back pipeline occupation

[Uncategorized](#) | December 2, 2015 by [Jorge Barrera](#)



(Enbridge map shows the energy firm's Canadian Mainline West pipeline connection with the U.S. Mainline West pipeline in Gretna, Man., which would be targeted for occupation by Roseau River First Nation. Enbridge website.)

Jorge Barrera

APTN National News

The chief of a Manitoba First Nation will be seeking support from the Assembly of First Nations next week to launch an occupy campaign targeting energy firm Enbridge's pipeline terminals if Ottawa fails to settle an outstanding historical grievance over lost territory.

Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation Chief Alfred Hayden says he plans to table a motion at the AFN special chiefs assembly in Gatineau, Que., calling on the AFN to support a campaign of action against Enbridge pipeline infrastructure if Ottawa fails to settle outstanding treaty land entitlement obligations by June 7.

Hayden said the pipeline and terminal fall within Roseau River's treaty lands, yet the First Nation receives nothing from the firm or Ottawa for the trespass.

"All these years have gone by and all we hear is talk and talk," said Hayden. "I am a new chief and I have been hearing this talk and talk all the time...I want to make things happen, not just talk."

Roseau River will also launch a multi-million dollar breach of treaty court action against Ottawa over its failure to turn-over agreed to territory for conversion into reserve land.

According to the draft of the resolution obtained by *APTN National News*, Roseau River will target Enbridge's Gretna, Man., pipeline terminal which sits about 75 kilometres southwest of the First Nation. The Enbridge Gretna terminal connects the energy firm's Canadian Mainline West pipeline with the U.S. Mainline West pipeline which eventually splits, with one arm running down to Chicago, Ill., and the other to Sarnia, Ont.

"First Nations don't get anything from them. We want something from them," said Hayden. "If nothing happens from what we are looking for, then come June 7 there will be something happening."

Former Roseau River chief Terry Nelson, who is now grand chief of the Southern Chiefs of Organization, said the direct action would likely involve an occupation of the pipeline terminal. Nelson said Enbridge would be forced to shut down the oil flow through the pipelines if maintenance crews can't access the terminal within three days.

"It's not a terrorist kind of action. It is basically saying, okay (Prime Minister Justin Trudeau) you said nation-to-nation, what does that mean?" said Nelson. "One thing that (previous prime minister Stephen Harper) proved was that Ottawa can cut funding to First Nations at any time they want. So we are going to cut them too then if that's the way they operate."



Southern Chiefs Organization Grand Chief Terry Nelson. APTN/File

The draft resolution also calls for other First Nation communities to take similar action against Enbridge pipeline terminals between Alberta and Manitoba.

All can be avoided if Ottawa finally settles its outstanding commitments on Roseau River's treaty land entitlement settlement, said Nelson.

The grievance stems from the Aug 3, 1871, signing of Treaty 1 by the Ojibway and Swampy Cree which involved 26,876 square kilometres of territory surrendered in southern Manitoba.

In 1993, Roseau River launched a \$763 million lawsuit against Ottawa based on the valuation of the territory and the Crown's failure to compensate the community over the loss of its reservation lands that were promised but never turned over.

While Roseau River settled with Ottawa in 1996, the federal government also admitted it had failed to turn over 2,371 hectares of reserve land that had been promised at the time of the treaty.

Ottawa said it would give itself 15 years to turn over the reserve land shortfall, but 19 years later, only about 29 hectares have been transferred to the band.

“(Chief Hayden) will lead a negotiating team to try and resolve the issue within the next six months. Failing that, notice will go to Enbridge...to shut down the Gretna pumping station,” said Nelson.

Nelson said Enbridge would get notice on June 1 if Roseau River failed to reach a settlement with Ottawa on the outstanding land.

Enbridge issued a statement saying it was “aware of the underlying and long-standing concerns of Roseau River Anishinaabe First Nation and other Treaty 1 member nations regarding unresolved treaty issues with the Crown.”

Enbridge said it planned to continue engaging with Roseau River and other First Nations to deal with any issues related to their projects, assets and operations.

“We understand the underlying issues that exist between First Nations and the Crown and we look forward to those parties engaging directly, to exchange and hopefully reconcile their respective views,” said the statement.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett’s office did not return a request for comment as of this article’s posting.

Enbridge is currently in the midst of National Energy Board hearings on its \$4.9 billion project to replace its Line 3 pipeline which runs between Hardisty, Alta., and Gretna.

Nelson was scheduled to testify at the hearings Wednesday.

The NEB is currently hearing Indigenous oral traditional evidence during sessions in Winnipeg that run until Thursday. The hearings will then resume in Calgary and run from Dec. 7 to Dec. 11.

AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde recently told *APTN*’s **Nation to Nation** that the NEB is not the appropriate venue to deal with the Crown’s duty to consult with First Nations on projects that impact their rights and territories.

The Trudeau government has stated it intends to enhance the NEB’s ability to deal with consultation, but has no plans to create a process specific for meeting the duty to consult outside of established regulatory bodies like the NEB.

The NEB has also begun hearings on TransCanada’s Energy East pipeline which will run across about 150 First Nation territories.

A former TransCanada official was recently appointed as special assistant to Finance Minister Bill Morneau. A former Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and Shell official was also recently appointed as chief of staff to Natural Resources Minister Jim Carr.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/12/02/manitoba-chief-wants-afn-to-back-pipeline-occupation-if-ottawa-fails-to-settle-on-owed-lands/>

Province dinged on the 'Ring of Fire'

By [Carol Mulligan](#), Sudbury Star

Thursday, December 3, 2015 1:04:13 EST AM



Auditor General of Ontario Bonnie Lysyk. (File photo)

Ontario auditor-general Bonnie Lysyk's value-for-money annual report, as it pertains to the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, outlines a pattern of inaction by the Liberal government to do anything to develop the Ring of Fire.

The province has shirked its responsibility to consult with first nations near the Ring of Fire, leaving that up to private companies, says Lysyk in the report.

It created a Ring of Fire secretariat in 2010 that has 19 employees and has spent \$13.2 million in the last five years while missing deadlines established by the ministry and lacking performance measures to assess its effectiveness.

Not a penny of the \$1 billion promised by the province to develop Ring of Fire infrastructure has been spent, said the auditor-general.

The Ring of Fire Infrastructure Development Corporation set up in 2014 to accelerate the building of roads, hydro and other services still has no representation on its board from first nations or industry. It continues to be run by five senior bureaucrats.

Yet it cost \$550,000 to set it up and it is expected it will have annual expenditures of \$4 million, including \$2.5 million for staffing, when it is operational.

Lysyk offers recommendations to ensure the "timely development" of the Ring of Fire. She says the ministry should:

- n Establish a detailed plan with measurable outcomes, and regularly assess and report on progress in achieving them;
- n Work to engage all stakeholders, including the federal government, in the funding and development of the region;

n Work to expedite negotiations with aboriginal communities.

Nipissing Progressive Conservative MPP Vic Fedeli, who has visited the Ring of Fire five times, couldn't agree more with what he called a "searing" report by Lysyk. He said the audit shows that millions of dollars is being spent by government on administration and none to develop infrastructure.

Algoma-Manitoulin New Democrat MPP Michael Mantha said the ministry has spent more on staffing its secretariat in the last five years than it has on anything constructive in the Ring of Fire. He said the report confirms what his party has been saying for years about inaction in the Ring of Fire.

Fedeli said it's frustrating to let what Lysyk called the most promising mineral find in a century sit idle because the provincial Liberals have no plan to move it forward.

The headlines in Lysyk's report tell the story, said Fedeli.

"Ring of Fire development has been slow," "Little development on the Ring of Fire to date," "Province lacks detailed plan or timeline to develop Ring of Fire," Secretariat missing deadlines, lacks performance measures to assess effectiveness in aiding development," "Stakeholders not engaged in the RofF development corporation."

Lysyk points out that despite the excitement after rich chromite deposits were discovered in the Ring of Fire in 2008, little has been done to develop them.

The Ring of Fire Secretariat, established in 2010 to lead the overall development of the region, has grown to have three regional offices, with 19 employees and total operating expenditures of \$13.2 million in the last five years.

Yet there are no performance measure to gauge whether the Secretariat is being effective, said Lysyk.

She noted the Secretariat has "continuously missed milestones established by the government for the development of the Ring of Fire."

When the Secretariat was established, the Liberal government was optimistic development would start in the Ring of Fire by 2015.

Lysyk reported the Ring of Fire Secretariat has distributed \$15.8 million to aboriginal communities for "capacity building," education and training initiatives, but some of the money hasn't been properly accounted for.

The objective of the audit, said Lysyk, was to see if the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines had effective systems and processes in place.

She concluded the ministry has not been effective in "encouraging timely mineral development in the province."

Lysyk gives the Liberals credit for establishing a regional framework agreement with aboriginal communities that lays out a community-based negotiation process for development of the Ring.

"However, the area is still not close to being ready for production since its discovery in 2008, and we found the ministry has no detailed plan or timeline for developing the region," Lysyk wrote.

Mining company officials with whom she spoke told her potential investors have been pushed away because consultation with first nations has been left up to companies and not led by the province.

Sudbury Star mining columnist Stan Sudol said the auditor-general's report highlights the lack of infrastructure in the Ring and the failure of government to make decisions relating to it.

He believes the priority transportation project has to be the east-west road that links four first nations and the Ring of Fire to the provincial highway system. "The aboriginal communities are very supportive," he said. "The delays on road construction have been astonishing."

In her report, Lysyk has essentially taken Northern Development and Mines Minister Michael Gravelle and his bureaucrats "behind the woodshed and delivered one helluva beating."

Lysyk noted in her report that mining provinces such as British Columbia and Quebec have full control over first nations consultation, whereas the Government of Ontario "delegates the responsibility to the junior miners," said Sudol.

"The report strongly suggested this must change," he said.

When asked to comment on the auditor-general's conclusions about his ministry, Northern Development and Mines Minister Michael Gravelle issued a statement thanking Lysyk for her recommendations and said his ministry continues to make improvements and build on its successes.

"This report has given us much to consider as we work to ensure Ontario is the global leader in mining," he said.

Gravelle said he looks forward to releasing the renewed mineral development strategy for the province this month.

"It will support his ministry's commitment to implement change related to her recommendations," he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.thesudburystar.com/2015/12/03/province-dinged-on-the-ring-of-fire>

Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

Elizabeth Fry Societies denied standing at Sask. inquiry into aboriginal woman's death

**Coroner says advocacy group does not have 'substantial interest' in
the Kinew James inquiry**

By Maureen Brosnahan, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 26, 2015 7:36 PM ET Last Updated:
Nov 26, 2015 10:15 PM ET



Kinew James, shown here in an undated photo, died of an apparent heart attack near the end of her 15-year sentence. She had been transferred from one prison to another and spent months in solitary. (CBC)

A Saskatchewan coroner has refused to allow the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies to participate in the inquest into the controversial death of an aboriginal woman in a federal prison hospital.

The inquest into the death of Kinew James is set to begin in January, but the agency, which advocates for female prisoners, has been denied standing by coroner Timothy Hawryluk.

In a letter he wrote: "I have concluded that your clients do not have a substantial interest in this inquest.... It is difficult to identify any circumstances where the jury in this stance

would have any recommendations directed to either the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies or EFRY Saskatchewan."

Hawryluk declined to comment further to CBC News.

"This is beyond shocking to us," said Kim Pate, executive director of the association, adding that it's the first time the group has ever been denied standing at an inquest.



Kim Pate, of the Elizabeth Fry Society, says authorities seem to be 'sticking their heads in the sand' about what has happened. (CBC)

"Certainly we have a substantial interest in these issues. We're the only organization that works exclusively with women. We go into the prisons on a regular basis. We are some of the first in the prison to meet with the women."

Pate said her agency is considering appealing the coroner's decision.

James died on Jan. 20, 2013, in the Regional Psychiatric Centre, a prison hospital in Saskatoon. The 35-year-old was from Winnipeg and nearing the end of a 15-year-sentence. She had been transferred to Saskatoon from the Grand Valley Institution for Women in Ontario [after speaking out about guards](#) who she said were smuggling in goods in exchange for sexual favours.

James, a diabetic, died of an apparent heart attack. Pate said she received several reports from other inmates at the time saying that James had repeatedly pressed her emergency call button for help but was ignored.

James was mentally ill and known to act out. In prison she was charged and convicted of acting out and assaulting staff. She had been transferred around the country from one prison to another and spent months at a time in solitary confinement.

Similarities to Ashley Smith?

Don Worme, lawyer for the James family, called it "extraordinary" that the group had been denied standing. "It's unfortunate. I think the Elizabeth Fry Society is an organization dedicated to standing with marginalized women and would have very important information and insight to be able to bring to this inquest, and I think that decision should be reconsidered."

"I expect that it would have something to do with other very high-profile deaths of female prisoners while in federal custody," he said.

"I refer specifically to [the Ashley Smith inquest](#) and others which have exposed the Correctional Service of Canada to some very serious shortcomings in terms of how to deal with female prisoners."

Smith and James served time together.

The Elizabeth Fry Societies had been the driving force behind exposing the conditions that led to the 2007 death of Ashley Smith. The 19-year-old choked herself to death in the Grand Valley Institution for Women near Kitchener, Ont., while guards stood outside her cell and watched. The lengthy inquest into Smith's death resulted in 104 recommendations, many concerning the treatment of inmates who are mentally ill.

Calls continue for Nova Scotia inquiry

In the meantime, calls are continuing for a public inquiry into the suspicious deaths of two other female inmates from Newfoundland and Labrador at Nova Institution, a federal prison in Nova Scotia. [Veronica Park died in April](#) and [Camille Strickland-Murphy took her own life in July](#). The families of both women are demanding answers about the quality of health care the women received.

Marian Mancini, a member of the Nova Scotia Legislature and NDP justice critic, is among those calling for an inquiry. "I really want to know what services are being provided at Nova. I want to know and the families want to know what kind of attention was being paid to their health issues and what kind of treatment they were getting," she said.

So far the Nova Scotia government has refused to hold an inquiry.

"Clearly we have at least three deaths where the authorities seem to be resisting intervening or exposing what happened to these women," said Pate, of the Elizabeth Fry Societies. "There certainly seems to be people sticking their heads in the sand perhaps hoping this will all go away."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kinew-james-inquest-aboriginal-prison-death-1.3339087>

Karina Wolfe death: Saskatoon police charge man with 2nd-degree murder

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 27, 2015 7:45 AM CT Last Updated: Nov 27, 2015 3:46 PM CT



Karina Wolfe went missing in July 2010. Remains found earlier this month near Saskatoon have been identified as those of the missing woman. (Saskatoon police)

A 33-year-old man arrested by Saskatoon police in connection with Karina Wolfe's death and disappearance has been charged with second-degree murder and with offering an indignity to her remains.

Earlier Friday, Saskatoon police confirmed that Wolfe, who disappeared from the city in July 2010, was killed and that a man had been arrested on Thursday.

The woman's remains were located on Nov. 14, after police received a tip a few days earlier.

Wolfe went missing in July 2010. She was last seen on the city's west side, and police were immediately concerned because of her high-risk lifestyle. She was 20 years old and had just moved back home with her family.



Dozens of Karina Wolfe's family and supporters walked together to remember her in a vigil held in July 2014. (Peter Mills/CBC)

Her mother, Carol, told CBC News her daughter had struggled with an addiction to crystal methamphetamine, a highly-addictive street drug.

Wolfe caught a ride with a friend to Saskatoon's west side on July 2, 2010, and that was the last time she was seen.

The 33-year-old is scheduled to see a justice of the peace Friday. He will appear in provincial court in Saskatoon on Monday morning.

Investigation active for years, police say

In a media scrum called by Saskatoon police late Friday morning, spokeswoman Alyson Edwards said Wolfe's remains were found in a marshy area northwest of the city. She confirmed police will identify the exact location on Monday.

Edwards also noted "this has been an open and active investigation for more than five years. We haven't wanted Karina to be forgotten about."

Wolfe's family and friends organized vigils to keep her in the public consciousness each year since her disappearance.

Her unsolved disappearance was one of 240 missing and murdered indigenous woman and girls whose cases were confirmed by CBC News.



At the time of this photo, in 2014, Carol Wolfe said she will never stop looking for her daughter Karina. (Madeline Kotzer/CBC)

Investigators who followed up on the original tip received earlier this month included the coroner's officer, forensic anthropologist Ernie Walker, the RCMP cold case major crime unit, the Corman Park Police Service, the SPS major crime unit and the missing persons unit. All were involved in excavating Wolfe's remains.

DNA testing confirmed that the remains belonged to Wolfe, although that information was not immediately released to the public.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/karina-wolfe-murdered-saskatoon-1.3339579>

Saskatoon event honours Karina Wolfe, missing and murdered indigenous women

Round dance marks 10 years of remembering missing and murdered daughters, sisters, mothers

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 28, 2015 12:02 PM CT Last Updated: Nov 28, 2015 4:10 PM CT



Organizers set up a donation tin for Karina Wolfe's family, after it was revealed on Nov. 27 that she was killed and dumped outside of Saskatoon. (Victoria Dinh/CBC)

A day after Saskatoon police laid charges against a man for allegedly killing Karina Wolfe, a local group that seeks to honour missing and murdered indigenous women held its 10th annual day of remembrance for victims of such violence.

The day's events included a feast and a round dance, held at the White Buffalo Youth Lodge on 20th Street W., and hosted by Iskwewuk E-Wichiwithochik, which is Cree for Women Walking Together. It's comprised of local women seeking to draw attention to missing and murdered indigenous women and to instigate a national inquiry for them.

On Friday, Saskatoon police laid second-degree murder charges against a 33-year-old man in connection with the disappearance and death of Karina Wolfe, who went missing in July 2010.

Investigators unearthed her remains in a marshy area northwest of the city on Nov. 14.



Pictures of missing, murdered and found indigenous women lined the venue where the feast and round dance were held. (Victoria Dinh/CBC)

Myrna LaPlante, who's a co-chair of the group, said revisions were made to the day's events in order to honour and remember Wolfe. She asked, on behalf of the group and Wolfe's family, that people not judge Karina based on her lifestyle.

At the time of her disappearance, Wolfe was allegedly addicted to methamphetamine.

"This is the work that we do," LaPlante said. "This is why we are here ... to support the families and to provide whatever we can to raise the awareness and keep the memory going."

Gwenda Yuzicappi's daughter Amber Redman was murdered in 2005. At the event, she spoke to some of the emotions Wolfe's mother, Carol, might be going through now.

"It's terrible to be able to grasp. You're grasping, gasping at the reality that your daughter is located; that you will not be able to have that talk or see that smile or have that hug," she said.

Redman's remains were found in 2008.

"You know, those are lost," Yuzicappi said.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/saskatoon-missing-murdered-indigenous-women-1.3341719>

Gathering honours Karina Wolfe, other missing and murdered aboriginal women



CTV Saskatoon

Published Saturday, November 28, 2015 7:07PM CST

Last Updated Saturday, November 28, 2015 7:39PM CST

Karina Wolfe's family is devastated, friends say.

Remains of the Saskatoon woman, who was 20 years old when she vanished more than five years ago, were recently discovered northwest of the city.

"They're heartbroken, devastated that those remains were Karina's," said Myrna LaPlante, who visited Wolfe's family as soon as she heard the remains were found.



A missing-persons poster for Karina Wolfe sits alongside other posters of missing and murdered aboriginal women at a gathering Saturday in Saskatoon.



Karina Wolfe is seen in this file photo.

LaPlante was one of many gathered Saturday at Saskatoon's White Buffalo Youth Lodge to honour missing and murdered aboriginal women and to remember Wolfe.

Gwenda Yuzicappi, whose own daughter was murdered, was also in attendance. She said Wolfe's mother had never stopped searching for Wolfe since she disappeared in July 2010.

"She had so much hope. That was one thing I admired about her — that hope that she carried," Yuzicappi said. "It just broke my heart."

Wolfe's remains were found Nov. 14 after police received information days earlier that led them to a rural area outside Saskatoon.

A 33-year-old man has since been charged with second-degree murder and with offering an indignity to human remains in the case. He is scheduled to appear in Saskatoon Provincial Court on Monday.

LaPlante, who is with a group that works with families of missing and murdered aboriginal woman, said she will be there with the Wolfe family in court and through these tough times.

"We will support whatever their plans are for taking Karina home, and that's to the Muskeg First Nation," said LaPlante, referring to the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, located north of Saskatoon.

Wolfe's relatives, who have held yearly vigils to remember her, have yet to speak to media.

Donations were collected at Saturday's event to help the family.

Direct Link: <http://saskatoon.ctvnews.ca/gathering-honours-karina-wolfe-other-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-1.2678714>

First phase of inquiry into missing, murdered indigenous women expected this week



Laurie Graham on the murder of a 20-year-old woman and how her death is adding new urgency for an inquiry to be called.

CTVNews.ca Staff

Published Monday, November 30, 2015 10:09PM EST

Last Updated Tuesday, December 1, 2015 12:19AM EST

The federal government is expected to release the details of the first phase of a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women this weekend, CTV News has learned.

Ottawa plans to make the announcement, which is expected to begin with the consultation of the victims' families, on or before the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on Dec. 6.

"As we promised, we will listen to the families first, who have good experience with this and good instincts, and then we will engage with the other partners in the aboriginal organizations, provinces and territories, (and) experts," said Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett.



The federal government is expected to release the details of the first phase of a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women this weekend, CTV News has learned.



Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett speaks at an event on Nov. 30, 2015



Grand Chief Derek Nepinak speaks to CTV News in Winnipeg.

A full inquiry is expected to be launched in the spring of 2016.

Bennett said the consultation will address core issues related to the inquiry, including its design, the amount of commissioners, the length, the number of families involved and the terms of reference.

She added that many of the victims' families are "very relieved" they will get to speak "directly" to the ministers involved, including herself, Minister of Justice Jody Wilson-Raybould and Minister of Status of Women Patty Hajdu.

Bennett said the Dec. 6 deadline is important because the government wants to ensure they're making progress in addressing violence against women, and in particular indigenous women.

"I think there is a real focus on this part of that issue, which is the disproportionate number of indigenous women missing or murdered."

Grand Chief Derek Nepinak, of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, said the consultation is an important first step.

"By getting into the communities, engaging with leadership and listening to a family first, I believe we are building the relationship necessary for a successful inquiry," he said.

Calls for a national inquiry have been growing since an RCMP review last year revealed that 1,181 aboriginal women have been murdered or gone missing since 1980 -- 164 missing and 1,017 homicide victims.

Bennett said earlier this month that she hoped to model the government's approach after the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, which included a consultation process.

With files from CTV's Deputy Ottawa Bureau Chief Laurie Graham and Field Producer Philip Ling

Direct Link: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/first-phase-of-inquiry-into-missing-murdered-indigenous-women-expected-this-week-1.2681042>

A MMIW inquiry must examine the child-welfare system

Cindy Blackstock

Contributed to The Globe and Mail

Published Wednesday, Dec. 02, 2015 6:00AM EST

Cindy Blackstock is an associate professor at the University of Alberta and executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society.

As the mandate for the inquiry on murdered and missing indigenous women takes shape, the government ought to consider the role systemic disadvantage plays in placing women and girls at higher risk for violence. The [recent revelations](#) in Val-d'Or, Que., for example, suggest that racism is more prevalent than we would like to think.

As a recent series in The Globe and Mail reported, a [number](#) of the murdered and missing women and girls were in foster care. A child-welfare system is an essential public service. In those rare occasions where parents are unable to ensure the safety and development of their children, the state must step in and provide alternative arrangements that will safeguard the interests of the children.

However, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission pointed out, the system is not well-suited to the needs of indigenous children. It does not account for the multigenerational impacts of residential schools and inequitable services on reserves. This means First Nations families have less support to care for their children than other Canadians. This entails a dramatic overrepresentation of First Nations children in foster care. The problem is so severe that there are more First Nations children in foster care today than at the height of residential schools. Too often, indigenous children removed from their families are placed in non-indigenous foster homes and experience multiple placements. When that happens, indigenous children are not only separated from their families, but also from their culture and from their communities. Taken together, these circumstances place First Nations girls and women at greater risk for disadvantage, including violence.

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society brought a human-rights challenge against the federal government to correct the inequalities in on-reserve child welfare and give First Nations an equitable chance to care for their children. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal is expected to rule soon on the matter. In the evidence before the tribunal, we learned that:

The federal funding formula puts an incentive on the removal of children from their families by inequitably funding family support services;

Rigidity in federal government mandates results in First Nations children being denied or delayed receipt of public services available to all other children;

Federal policy prevents the adaptation of provincial child-welfare systems to First Nations cultures and community needs;

The federal government pays non-aboriginal child-welfare providers more money than it pays First Nations to deliver the same services.

Instead of remedying the inequalities First Nations children experience, the previous federal government failed to implement evidence-based solutions to address the problems and spent at least \$5-million trying to derail the human-rights case on legal technicalities. This regressive public-policy approach got in the way of implementing proven strategies

to help First Nation children and families, and in doing so perpetuated the long, dark shadow of federal-government discrimination against First Nations children.

Tragically, Canadian governments have not paid enough attention to the well-being of children. The KidsRights Index ranks Canada 57th in the world when it comes to respecting children's rights in proportion to its wealth. That means the Canadian economy is doing about five times better than Canadian kids are.

Saving money on the backs of kids is fool's gold. As the World Health Organization notes, for every government dollar invested in children, taxpayers save \$7 in downstream costs, such as policing, addictions and social assistance. Thus it makes good economic and moral sense for the federal government to end inequalities in First Nations education, health and child welfare.

When an inquiry gets under way and explores how these tragedies can be prevented, it should turn its attention to the long-standing gaps in children's services in First Nation communities. The federal government simply can't afford to continue to use racial discrimination as a fiscal-restraint measure. Our children deserve better.

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/a-mmiw-inquiry-must-examine-the-child-welfare-system/article27549551/>

Hundreds gather to support families of missing, murdered indigenous women

Fundraiser solicits donations to foundation that provides culturally sensitive support

[CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 03, 2015 8:44 AM CT Last Updated: Dec 03, 2015 12:38 PM CT



As hundreds of people streamed into Winnipeg's Indian and Metis Friendship Centre on Thursday, Sue Caribou thought about members of her family who have been taken, killed or possibly both — for two of them, she can't be sure.



Sue Caribou, whose niece Tanya Nepinak is among Manitoba's missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, is pleased so many people came out and supported the Families First Foundation. (Meaghan Ketcheson/CBC)

"My first caregiver was Nancy Dumas," she told CBC.

"When we came home from residential, she would look after us."

Dumas was 78 when she disappeared from Lynn Lake, Man., after leaving her daughter's home. That was in 1987, and she hasn't been seen since.

Twenty-three years later, Caribou's family hoped they would find the body of her niece, Tanya Jane Nepinak, in Winnipeg's Brady Landfill.

"But they stopped the search," she said.

With a \$5 bill in her hand, Nepinak vanished from Winnipeg's streets while walking to a pizza restaurant in 2011.

So on Thursday, Caribou described feeling overwhelmed while watching people leave monetary donations at the friendship centre, during a free pancake breakfast put on to raise money for families like her own.

The money is for the Families First Foundation for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which was recommended in a report that called for culturally sensitive support for families whose loved ones are missing or dead.

Caribou, who is on the foundation's board, said funds raised will help families meet particular needs.

"The money is going to help the families either get a headstone or have a feast for their loved one or ceremony," she said.

"Counselling if they need counselling ... some family members will have maybe a good holiday, Christmas holiday."

Police offer support

The breakfast was a partnership of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre and the Winnipeg Police Service.

Between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m., officers served pancakes to those who came through the doors.

For Caribou, the gesture was meaningful, considering historical tension between police and indigenous communities across the country, particularly in the context of missing and murdered girls and women.

"We do need to be partners [with police] and we need to be going on the same path and ... same direction," she said.

"I hope we come as one and be treated equal, like everybody else."

Care, respect for families

Karen Harper of the AMC, one of the breakfast's organizers, said there was no fundraising goal for the event, but it was important for families to see the community show up.



Karen Harper is one of the organizers with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs of the Forever in Our Hearts Pancake Breakfast on Thursday. (Meaghan Ketcheson/CBC)

"Feeling honoured, feeling respected, knowing that people really do care — and that is our grassroots people, they really do care," Harper said.

The Families First Foundation's objectives are similar: Educating the public on families' needs and co-ordinating the delivery of religious, spiritual, emotional, cultural and financial support are at the top of the list.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/hundreds-gather-to-support-families-of-missing-murdered-indigenous-women-1.3348610>

Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations

Native American educators teach their first Thanksgiving story

[Deepa Fernandes](#)

November 26 2015

Kindergarten students at Weemes Elementary in Exposition Park study the first thanks giving story in 2014, adding culture and flavor of their own.

Deepa Fernandes/KPCC



It's that time of year when our youngest learners are coloring pilgrims and Indians and learning the story of the first Thanksgiving. That story has been taught to generation after generation, and generally involves British pilgrims landing in America, sowing crops and sharing the first harvest in a meal with local Native Americans to give thanks for the bounty.

That's not the story author and educator [Jacqueline Keeler](#) learned when she five.

“Growing up, my mom made it very clear to me that there was another story,” said Keeler, who is a member of the Diné Nation and the Yankton Dakota Sioux. Her mother told her the pilgrims coming amounted to “theft of our lands.”

Her mother taught her that Native people did indeed show kindness to the pilgrims arriving. She told her “how much the pilgrims were truly struggling and how desperate they were for the help, [and] the fact that they would not have survived without Native American assistance.”

Her mother also warned her she would hear a different story in school. “She did encourage us to challenge [our teachers] if we heard things that were derogatory towards Native people,” Keeler added.

After all, the real-deal history is not pretty, and the pilgrims aren’t presented accurately in the widespread first Thanksgiving story, according to Keeler and many others.

“Often the pictures are of these white pilgrims in these very crisp clean clothes, you know, bringing in Native people into this bounty,” Keeler said. “Actually they were starving to death, half the people had died, and it was the native people who brought most of the food.”

Keeler is a writer and educator and works with American Indian Child Resource Center in Oakland. She has written about what thanks giving means to Native people, and [her work is used in middle school’s](#) to plant the seeds of an alternative narrative. Yet Keeler believes the education must start younger – in preschool and kindergarten. That’s precisely the time when the standard narrative of Thanksgiving history is taught.

So what would Keeler say to a room of five-year-olds?

“I would explain what Thanksgiving means to my own people, we have our own Thanksgiving traditions. And one of the things that we give thanks for is our continued existence.”

That’s definitely a deep concept for a five-year-old, but Keeler says, honesty with kids is important. After her mother told her the history, Keeler said she felt stronger.

“I had some inside knowledge into what happened when these poor starving came to our shores, and I had the feeling that I had to challenge the system,” she said. Little Keeler told her teachers what her mother had taught her, and they listened, she said. “I felt lucky that I had a lot of great teachers that were willing to hear my perspective even as a child.”

Yet she felt uncomfortable as a child being the authority figure on something her teachers didn’t know about. The support at home was crucial, Keeler said.

But not all young children have parents who can help them understand Native American history. “I know that a lot of young Native people don’t have that support; maybe they

live in foster homes, and they have to address these things much more alone and without the confidence that having a parent who really supports you would provide.”

For Keeler, understanding why Native American people don’t share the same version of Thanksgiving history means a deeper understanding of Native history. Do students today know what a sovereign nation under international law is, she asks?

“I’m a citizen of the Navajo nation, the largest tribe in the United States,” Keeler said. “We have a population equal to Iceland...and we are a country within the US, and yet most Americans don’t understand that. My husband’s tribe – Six Nations -- they issues their own passport, they travel under their own passport.”

“Part of the problem with the [Thanksgiving] story as told is that it makes it seem like we all kind of came to terms in Massachusetts all those years ago and Native people sort of disappeared into the American soup, and that’s simply not true,” Keeler said.

So if you want to give your child a different narrative to the standard pilgrim-Indian feast this Thanksgiving, start simple, Keeler said. There are [some children’s books](#) that offer this different history, but there’s a need for more, Keeler said.

[Native American children's author Debbie Reese has a blog](#) where she keeps track of what’s available in the world of children’s literature that features Native children and storylines.

If Keeler is talking to children directly, “first I would ask them what they know about Native people,” she said. “I think that we start with the idea of a more clear understanding of who and what Native people are.”

“I think it is a very serious topic, [but] if it is given in a hopeful way, children understand it,” she said.

Direct Link: <http://www.scpr.org/news/2015/11/26/55845/native-american-take-on-thanks-giving/>

Native American Casinos Seek Labor Law Exemption

House-passed bill has bipartisan support, but unions oppose loss of workers’ collective-bargaining rights



Gov. Joseph Talachy, of the Pojoaque Pueblo, pictured at the Buffalo Thunder Casino and Resort in Santa Fe, N.M., says 80% of the tribe's annual budget comes from casino-related revenue. Photo: STEVEN ST. JOHN for The Wall Street Journal

By Dan Frosch And Melanie Trottman
Nov. 27, 2015 1:50 p.m. ET

A battle is brewing in Congress over legislation that would exempt Native American casinos from a federal labor law allowing workers to unionize.

The bill, which cleared the House lastweek, has support from an unusual mix of Republicans and Democrats who contend the exemption is critical to keeping Indian tribes' fragile economies afloat. But it has also garnered opposition from labor unions that call it an affront to workers' rights, and from President Barack Obama, who is pushing for changes to the bill.

For years now, Native American leaders have argued that the National Labor Relations Act, which grants workplace protections to most private sector employees, should not apply to tribal casinos—much like it exempts federal, state and local governments. Indian casinos, they argue, are extensions of tribal governments, and have become such a critical part of their budgets that labor disputes could cripple tribes.

“The casino revenue from tribes funds essential day-to-day services,” said Jason Giles, executive director of the National Indian Gaming Association, which represents 184 of 245 tribes with gaming operations. “If the revenue were ever to stop, you would see a return to the types of poverty that existed before tribal gaming.”

Net Indian gaming revenue in 2014 accounted for \$10.4 billion that went directly to tribal governments, according to the group, and in many cases funded the majority of tribal operations, like police, fire and social services.

But union officials, who estimate that there are more than 600,000 employees connected to tribal casinos, say the bill would strip workers of collective bargaining rights and other protections under the NLRA, like the right to seek workplace improvements without retaliation.

“The AFL-CIO believes in both tribal sovereignty and worker solidarity. We don't have to choose,” said AFL-CIO President [Richard Trumka](#).

In urging members of Congress to oppose the bill last week, union officials cited the 2004 National Labor Relations Board ruling that the legislation seeks to overturn.

In that case, which involved the San Manuel Indian Bingo and Casino in California, the board ruled that applying the NLRA would not interfere with the tribe's autonomy. It noted that the casino was a commercial enterprise that employed and catered to non-Native Americans.

Union officials said the majority of casino workers who would be affected by the bill aren't Native American.

"We want these casinos to succeed," said Bill Samuel a lobbyist for the AFL-CIO, but "why should they live under a different set of rules" than non-Indian competitors

Tribal officials said fears of workers being shielded from labor protections were overblown, noting that tribes had long been friendly to unions. They said the legislation was important to affirm that tribes be afforded the same rights as local governments, noting that those workers directly employed at casinos are tribal employees.

"I believe Indian Country has become sophisticated enough and the gaming industry is competitive enough to where there is no way we cannot afford to treat our employees well," said Joseph Talachy, governor of the Pojoaque Pueblo in New Mexico

According to Mr. Talachy, roughly 80% of the tribe's approximately \$15 million annual budget comes from casino-related revenue.

In particular, the Buffalo Thunder resort and casino, tucked among the canyons and mesas of northern New Mexico, has been a boon for the pueblo's economy, he said. On a recent weekday, the casino buzzed with activity—as elderly native women played slots and several well-dressed men huddled around blackjack tables.

The majority of tribal casino workers around the U.S. are not unionized, and the measure could put them further out of unions' reach.

Some unions, like Unite Here, have reached labor agreements with individual tribes that could pave the way for unionization. The union already represents thousands of tribal union members in California. Its president, D. Taylor, likened the opposition to the legislation to the fight against income inequality.

Mr. Obama has also voiced opposition and wants changes to the measure. According the White House Office of Management and Budget, he could support the legislation if tribes were required to adapt labor practices equivalent to NLRA standards.

It is unclear whether the Senate will take up the measure before Congress adjourns for the holidays.

Direct Link: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/native-american-casinos-seek-labor-law-exemption-1448650225>

Time to pick new Native American Heritage Day

By Simon Moya-Smith

Updated 11:48 AM ET, Fri November 27, 2015



Native American Heritage Day shouldn't be tied to a day like Black Friday, says Simon Moya-Smith.

Simon Moya-Smith is a citizen of the Oglala Lakota Nation and culture editor at [Indian Country Today](#). Follow him on Twitter [@Simonmoyasmith](#). The opinions expressed in this commentary are solely those of the author.

(*CNN*)Black Friday. It's a de facto commercial holiday when millions of Americans stand in line for hours on end outside chain stores, often in bone-chilling temperatures, in the hopes of getting the latest and shiniest whatever at discounted prices.

But November 27 is not just Black Friday. By [presidential proclamation](#), it is also Native American Heritage Day.



Simon Moya-Smith

This, folks, is egregious.

November is Native American Heritage Month. Its roots date back to 1900 when Arthur Caswell Parker, who was Seneca and is the founder of the National Congress of American Indians, [first advocated](#) for a day to recognize this country's indigenous population.

In 1914, Red Fox James, a Blackfoot, [rode horseback](#) for thousands of miles, through several states, before finally arriving in Washington to petition President Woodrow Wilson for an "Indian Day."

Fast forward to 2009, and Congress and President Barack Obama finally designated the Friday following Thanksgiving as Native American Heritage Day. Of course, Native Americans are not opposed to a day set aside to recognize our achievements, our continuing contributions and especially our service to this country (per capita, Native Americans serve in the military [more than any other ethnic group](#)). What we are opposed to is sharing the day with something as trivial as Black Friday.

Native American Heritage Day deserves honorable recognition, and should not be tied to a day when people purchase copious amounts of material possessions after just having consumed copious amounts of food in the name of a holiday that belies the brutality Native Americans suffered at the hands of the Pilgrims.

As Chase Iron Eyes, a Hunkpapa-Oglala Lakota and vice president of the National Native American Boarding School Healing Project, noted, Black Friday is the antithesis of Native American morals.

"(It's) capitalism gone wild (and) diametrically opposed to Native American values," he said, noting that real riches are your loved ones and a healthy ecosystem upon which we can all rely.

The truth is, on Black Friday, as they shiver in the cold, flirting with pneumonia, Americans are not wishing other store-goers a "Happy Native American Heritage Day!" And they are certainly not discussing Native American values.

Plus, on Black Friday, students are not in class. Professors, like most Americans, are far from the hallowed halls of their universities. We need our educators in the classrooms on Native American Heritage Day to impart upon the next generation lessons concerning our history, and, yes, our present prosperity and plight.

The solution seems obvious -- pick another day for Native American Heritage Day, perhaps the first Monday of November, and not the last Friday. Given all the pains Native Americans have suffered throughout the centuries, such as massacres, forced removal from and theft of our homelands, broken treaties and all manner of dehumanization, is it so much to ask not to lump Native American Heritage Day -- a day meant to honor us -- with a consumer holiday that has no honor?

Apparently it is.

Of course, I am left wondering if this preposterous combination would fly with any other group. Would the black or Asian or Latino communities feel honored or even sit idly by as a day established to recognize their contributions was clasped with that one day a year known mostly for shoppers being viciously trampled in the name of savings?

I do not think so.

Sadly, as Native Americans, we routinely have to remind people that we have not died off. I'm not kidding -- ask many Native Americans, and they will tell you they have encountered that exact assumption. I believe people think we are gone because we are mostly ignored in society -- just like Native American Heritage Month and Day.

Still, I believe that if Americans could put the same effort into recognizing and embracing the Native American today the way they do our dream catchers and fringed buckskin clothing, then they might just begin to understand how important it really is that we choose the right day and month to honor a race of people who were once slated for extermination by this country.

We have always deserved better than what we have been dealt, and we certainly deserve better than Black Friday.

Direct Link: <http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/27/opinions/smith-native-american-heritage-day/>

Historic images show Native American way of life

By Benazir Wehelie, Special to CNN

Updated 7:53 PM ET, Tue November 24, 2015

(CNN)Forty-two years ago, Christopher Cardozo discovered [the works of Edward S. Curtis](#), whose photographs, text, film footage and sound recordings focus on the Native American population and their way of life.

Cardozo has been collecting Curtis' work ever since, and today he has about 4,000 of Curtis' photographic prints -- the largest collection in the world.

["Edward S. Curtis: One Hundred Masterworks,"](#) is Cardozo's ninth monograph on Curtis, and it includes a selection of what Cardozo believes are Curtis' best images. The photo book also serves as the catalog for a traveling exhibition set to continue until December 2016.

"A lot of people are familiar with Curtis' imagery, but often in very poor reproductions and not always of great original prints," Cardozo said.



Photographer Edward S. Curtis

The photo book, Cardozo says, is focused on purely artistic executions. Equally as important as the history behind each and every one of the sepia-toned photographs is the humanity that lives within them.

"Really the core and the essence of the photographs in this book, 'One Hundred Masterworks,' are really all about the art and the beauty and who these people were as human beings, independent of any cultural group." Cardozo said.

Despite the fact that Curtis' images were taken more than 100 years ago, they have managed to endure. Cardozo believes they have a great importance and significance in the modern-day world.

"I've sent exhibitions to 40 countries, from Papua New Guinea to South Africa to Paris, Finland, all over the world," Cardozo said. "And what we've seen is people responding to these images irrespective of their socioeconomic status, independent of their culture, independent of their educational background."

These Native people who actively participated in creating this record with (Curtis) were very much giving of themselves. They're very present, they're open, vulnerable in some cases. They're really trying to share who they are as human beings.

Christopher Cardozo

Cardozo attributes the power and value of the images to Curtis himself, stating how he believes the making of the photographs was a collaborative effort that ultimately culminated to "tell us a deeply human story" about a population that was at one time -- and perhaps even today -- widely misunderstood.

"These Native people who actively participated in creating this record with him were very much giving of themselves," Cardozo said. "They're very present, they're open, vulnerable in some cases. They're really trying to share who they are as human beings. ... It's an incredible message about resilience. It's a great message about diversity, inclusion, passion, persistence, vision."

Cardozo says Curtis' images have changed people's views and perceptions toward Native Americans immensely, because at the core of each there is an underlying presence of "beauty, heart and spirit."

He notes that there was a time in history when it was uncertain whether the Native American people would survive as a race, and there were people actively advocating for the massacre of the Native American people entirely. According to Cardozo, "Curtis played a big part in helping turn that around."

Cardozo adds that Curtis' work has played just as big a role in the lives of Native American people themselves.

"The work is being used actively by Native people to help them rediscover who they are, what their language was, what their customs and rituals were," Cardozo said. "In many cases, the descendants of people who Curtis photographed have no photographs of them. If you think of what conditions were like in 1900, even if they were given photographs -- which often happened -- they've been lost or destroyed. I am finding that the Native people, overwhelmingly, really appreciate what Curtis and their ancestors did together."

[A portrait of the American Indian](#)

What Cardozo enjoys most about collecting Curtis' work is being able to share it with the world. But he says the other big thrill for him is the continuous process of discovering materials that he has never seen before.

"Seeing Curtis' work for the first time ... that was one of the most transformative experiences of my life," Cardozo said. "Being able to bring what is fundamentally a healing message to the world ... being able to bring something to people that has such an impact all over the world on all kinds of people -- that is just an amazing joy."

Edward S. Curtis was an American photographer during the early 1900s. He spent nearly three decades documenting Native American tribes.

Direct Link: <http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/24/us/cnnphotos-curtis-masterworks-native-americans/>

Native Americans in Louisiana Swamps Seek Tribal Recognition

By cain burdeau, associated press

LAFITTE, La. — Nov 25, 2015, 11:30 PM ET



In this Oct. 30, 2015 photo, Giovanni R. Santini poses with a homemade bow and arrow during an interview in his home in Lafitte, La. Santini has spent decades trying to prove he's an American Indian, and folks in his bayou town no longer doubt he's a proud member of the 17,000-strong tribe Houma scattered across south Louisiana. Not so for the federal government. For decades, efforts by the Houma to become a federally recognized native American tribe have failed — much like those of dozens of other groups nationwide. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

Giovanni R. Santini has done just about all he could to prove he's an American Indian over the decades he's lived in his [Louisiana](#) bayou town — even fighting with his fists to defend his bloodline with the Houma tribe.

"Every day at school they'd beat me up, bloody me up, for being Indian," recalled the 80-year-old Santini, who's worked on tugboats, laid pipelines and built homes. "We became good fighters because they beat us up so much. Even teachers didn't like me ... We earned our respect with fights!"

Today the folks in Lafitte, this town of fishermen and oilfield workers, don't doubt he's a proud member of the 17,000-strong tribe of Houma Indians scattered over south Louisiana's bayou communities.

Not so for the federal government.

For decades, efforts by the Houma to become a federally recognized native American tribe have failed. It's a story common across the nation for dozens of groups that have come up short while trying to prove they should be treated as sovereign nations.

But this could change.

In June, the Obama administration hit the reset button on how a tribe becomes recognized by the federal [Bureau of Indian Affairs](#), or BIA. It's a sea change that's expected make it much less difficult for many tribes — including the Houma — to achieve tribal status.

The biggest difference is that a tribe now will have to prove its existence and cohesion starting only in 1900. Until now, tribes had to prove they'd been intact tribes — with unique identities, cultures and governance — dating to historical times. For the Houma, that meant tracing a history stretching back to 1682 when French explorers first wrote about them.

Besides the Houma, there are four other tribes alone in coastal Louisiana seeking sovereignty. And much is at stake: water rights, land rights, fishing rights, mineral rights and millions of dollars in federal aid. Sovereignty also brings taxation and law-making powers.

For south Louisiana's native Americans, obtaining federal recognition could be a major step for impoverished American-Indian communities in their struggle to survive and hold onto ancestral lands disappearing along the Gulf. Traditionally, these communities lived off the riches of the marshes — fishing, trapping and foraging.

Places like Lafitte have been battered by coastal erosion, loss of fisheries and environmental assaults such as the catastrophic 2010 Gulf oil spill.

"It's definitely a fight for survival," said Thomas Dardar, chief of the United Houma Nation. "The coast is being washed out. We just go from one disaster after another."

Facing such difficulties, the Houma tribe — which has been recognized as a tribe by the state — seeks to maintain its cohesion. It has a tribal council, sponsors cultural events, such as summer camps and pow wows, and has a cultural center in Golden Meadow.

It's far from clear what federal recognition would do for tribes pursuing claims over coastal lands rich in oil and gas. Most of south Louisiana is in private hands. But legal experts agreed that it was unlikely that Louisiana's coastal tribes suddenly would be given any large tracts.

"I don't think ConocoPhillips will have to turn all its lands over to the American Indians," said Mark Davis, a Tulane University law professor and expert on Louisiana's coastal issues.

Lawyer Patty Ferguson, a member of the Pointe-Au-Chien tribe, hopes her tribe can at the least have more power to save Indian mounds, burial sites and other tribal areas eroding into the Gulf.

"With federal recognition, we'll have more voice," Ferguson said.

The federal government presently recognizes four tribes in Louisiana — the Chitimacha, Choctaw, Chousatta and Tunica-Biloxi tribes, though these were historically larger and intact tribes living farther inland.

The Houma tribe pushed for federal recognition starting before [World War II](#). Rejected by the BIA in 1994, the tribe has been appealing since. In the 90s, Louisiana politicians even sought tribal recognition through Congress but failed.

It wasn't that the Houma tribe couldn't prove they had native American ancestry. A Houma tribe was mentioned in French documents as early as 1682. The French said the Houma — with a red crawfish as their symbol — were living roughly where Baton

Rouge is today and marked their territory with a "Baton Rouge," French for "Red Stick." Priests historically described the Houma as a rich culture with male and female leaders.

But the BIA argued the tribe eventually went extinct amid intermarriage and disease. It also rejected claims the Houma were an organized tribe, calling them an amalgamation of native American groups.

Many experts disagreed.

"They had a pretty strong case," said Mark Miller, a Southern Utah University history professor who wrote about the Houma petition in a book, "Forgotten Tribes."

Miller argues the Houma case revealed flaws in the tribal recognition process. He said the BIA relied too much on written records, of which none exist for the Houma. The group's isolation in Southern swamps also hurt its chances.

Greatly disappointed, Houma leaders said they've been discriminated against by a federal government more keen to protect Louisiana oil and gas development than defend tribes.

"There's too much involved," Santini said, interviewed in a small wooden home he built. "Too much land involved. They don't want to give the land back."

His front room exudes his native American spirit: Indian art is on display, a handmade spear graces the corner, and framed tribal documents and albums with ancestors' photos abound.

Like many native Americans, he claims his family was illegally forced off their land decades ago.

"The oil companies are the biggest ones to take our land," he said. With pride he added: "We're still Indian. They can't take that from me."

Direct Link: <http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/native-americans-louisiana-swamps-seek-tribal-recognition-35419545>

Protesters want no Native American costumes at Long Beach Turkey Trot



A small group protested the wearing of Native American costumes at the 13th-annual Long Beach Turkey Trot on Thursday. Brittany Murray — Staff Photographer

By [Andrew Edwards](#), Press-Telegram

Posted: 11/26/15, 3:46 PM PST | Updated: 3 days ago



A small group protested the wearing of Native American costumes at the 13th-annual Long Beach Turkey Trot on Thursday. Brittany Murray — Staff Photographer

LONG BEACH >> A small group of protestors gathered near the beachfront site of the Long Beach Turkey Trot and called for ban against Native American-themed costumes at the event.

The protestors consider the wearing of such costumes disrespectful to Native Americans and their cultures.

“I got to speak with the organizer and I got to ask him if he would kindly ban the costumes, and he said he’s not in a position to do that just yet, but he understands our concerns,” said Gray Wolf, a protester who said he’s active with the American Indian Movement. “I think we made a little headway.”

Such costumes were a rare sight at Thursday’s event. A reporter observed about five people among an estimated 4,000 attendees who donned feathered headware that

somewhat resembled ceremonial Native American attire. Many more people wore hats resembling Thanksgiving turkeys.

Community Action Team, a Long Beach charity, organized Turkey Trot. A note on the event's webpage and a sign at the event advised that Native American-themed costumes were discouraged.

Community Action Team founder Justin Rudd said the decision to discourage such costumes was made out of sensitivity for people's feelings, but he hasn't concluded that a formal ban is the right course of action.

"It's always a possibility. All of us learn as we go, but I don't want to say 'yes,'" he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.presstelegram.com/general-news/20151126/protesters-want-no-native-american-costumes-at-long-beach-turkey-trot>

No Thanks: How Thanksgiving Narratives Erase the Genocide of Native Peoples

Thursday, 26 November 2015 00:00 By [Joanne Barker](#), Truthout | Op-Ed



This mural, "Reconcile," was produced by Gregg Deal in 2014 in Washington, DC. While offering commentary on the local professional football team, the mural also puts indigenous stereotype, identity and appropriation in a historical context. (Credit: Gregg Deal)

"It was not all Thanksgiving dinners in those early days."
- Vine Deloria Jr. (Lakota)

I have nothing to say about Thanksgiving. Or maybe I should say, Thanksgiving has nothing to say to me.

Like sports mascots and hipster doofus celebrities wearing faux headdresses, Thanksgiving has nothing to do with Native American and Indigenous people in the United States. And try as Native people might, we can't seem to get rid of it or change the

way it is perceived or represented. This is because Thanksgiving, like mascots and faux headdresses, serves the capitalism of empire.

Thanksgiving erases the genocide, sexual violence, land fraud and hate that defined early colonial histories and that continue to define US-Native relations.

The national holiday image of a happy extended family inviting another to generously celebrate a harvest of good food erases, distorts, shames and belittles Native people in the interest of making a buck (whether it be a dollar or the capital of cross-cultural awareness). Retailers love Thanksgiving's inauguration of the season, which promises every year to pull them out of the red (no pun intended). Sports fans love Thanksgiving and its near-constant stream of games and all of the competition (betting) and commercialism it brings with it. And self-proclaimed fashionistas love that Thanksgiving legitimates their use of headdresses as "hip" costumes. After all, how bad can it be to wear grown-up versions of those headdresses they cut out in grade school, alongside pilgrim hats and turkey feathers?

Thanksgiving is a nationalist holiday defined by the rituals of making money and self indulgence. Nationalist traditions advance the idea of the freedom to be happy by erasing the consequences of imperial capitalism.

Those traditions are certainly not about the "first Thanksgiving" in 1637. John Winthrop, governor of an English colony in what is now Massachusetts, held a feast in honor of a volunteer militia who had returned from their massacre of 700 men, women and children of the Pequot Nation. The federal holiday was established in 1863. By then, the mythic narrative had become the national truth: Pilgrims (Americans) gave thanks for surviving, thanks to the "Indians" who fed them and taught them how to grow corn.

Nothing about the myth, of course, is about Native people, neither the genocide and enslavement - nor the survival - of the Pequot Nation or other Native nations in New England. Thanksgiving erases the genocide, sexual violence, land fraud and hate that defined early colonial histories and that continue to define US-Native relations. It distorts into a magically happy scene of an extended family dinner, including the "racial other," a relationship that was and is actually based on slavery, poverty, war and rape. And it shames and belittles Native people who contest and contend the representations as wannabe politically correct, overly sensitive, "not enoughs" trying to grab onto the public spotlight for themselves.

And so Native people talk about the real "Thanksgiving" (the first and the ones that followed), the lives and struggles of Native people today for treaty and territorial rights, and the cultural significance of headdresses. And in the backlash of those discussions, Native people are told to get over it. They're being too sensitive. Ridiculous. Boring.

This is all because the "Indian" that Thanksgiving represents is not Native and does not belong to Native people. It is the "Indian" of a colonial present, created by US expansionist, extractive capitalism.

Refusing Capitalism

"If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."
- Lilla Watson (Murri [Aboriginal Australian])

What if Natives could reimagine the challenge of Thanksgiving not as one of "correcting the history" but as one of refusing the imperial state's capitalism that this history normalizes and legitimates? What if non-Native allies could see that the issues defining Thanksgiving, mascots and faux headdresses for Native people are related to their own struggles for labor, wage, housing, immigrant and refugee rights, and other social justice issues?

**I honestly do not care if people have a turkey dinner with their family.
I do care if people pretend that such a day celebrates or honors
Native history and culture.**

Native concerns and ideas about Thanksgiving are situated within a broader political context that includes struggles for labor, wage, housing, immigrant and refugee rights, struggles against police violence and struggles for social justice. These are struggles aimed at US imperialism and capitalism, at the way the exploitation of the land and environment supports the military-police-surveillance-industrial complex, at the way that complex facilitates gender- and sexual-based violence, and at the way it legitimates political suppression for national security. In other words, US imperialism and capitalism have produced the situation in which Native peoples are erased, poor people's labor is exploited, Black people are murdered with impunity by police, immigrants are illegally detained and deported, and the land and water is destroyed in the name of oil and gas extraction.

Native efforts are not merely against Thanksgiving for Thanksgiving's sake. Their efforts are to be seen, heard and respected, for the sake of their treaty, territorial and environmental justice rights. When they are told that their concerns about Thanksgiving's erasure of colonialism are irrelevant and outdated, they are being told - and they hear - that their struggles for treaty, territorial and environmental justice do not matter.

To the extent that the colonial narrative of Thanksgiving erases Native peoples, it simultaneously erases attention on their current rights efforts to protect the land and the water from extractive, contaminant technologies and the way those efforts are linked to others' social justice concerns.

What's Honor Got to Do With It?

I haven't celebrated Thanksgiving in quite a long time. But I honestly do not care if people have a turkey dinner with their family and/or friends and watch TV on Thanksgiving. I do care if people pretend that such a day celebrates or honors Native history and culture.

I challenge everyone to find out who the Indigenous people are of the land that they celebrate Thanksgiving on, whether it be at their own residence or someone else's. I challenge them to educate themselves about the history and current struggles of that people - and to do something productive to honor them and their ancestors.

Direct Link: <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/33781-no-thanks-how-thanksgiving-narratives-erase-the-genocide-of-native-peoples>

Paraguay head of indigenous affairs sacked over 'kick'

- 28 November 2015
- From the section [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Image copyright Reuters Image caption A rally against violence against women was held in the Paraguayan capital Asuncion this week

The president of Paraguay has fired the head of the country's indigenous affairs office after he apparently kicked an indigenous woman.

A social media video shows Jorge Servin lift his knee and connect with the woman in the stomach.

President Horacio Cartes said he could not allow someone representing indigenous people to kick them.

Mr Servin denied striking the women during a protest, and said he had lifted his knee in self-defence.

The Ava Guarani indigenous community had been demonstrating in the north of the country after Mr Servin sent a bill to the Paraguayan parliament restricting the leasing of state land by indigenous people.

The National Indigenous Institute is responsible for developing policies related to the 19 ethnic communities of Paraguay.

Around 2% of the Paraguayan population identifies themselves as indigenous with most of them living in extreme poverty.

Direct Link: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-34952402>

Gift will aid research on Native American health concerns

By [John Lundy](#) on Nov 27, 2015 at 4:36 p.m.

A difficulty in responding to Native American health concerns, says Michelle Johnson-Jennings, is a lack of good information.

"When tribal communities go to the government (for grants), they're told there's no evidence," said Johnson-Jennings, director of the University of Minnesota's Research for Indigenous Community Health Center in Duluth. "What we're hoping to do is develop an online database so that it can be used in writing grants."

That goal is \$440,000 closer to reality, thanks to a gift from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. It's part of a total of \$1 million the wealthy tribe — whose assets include the Mystic Lake Casino — bestowed on the U of M this month as part of what the tribe calls its Seeds of Native Health campaign.

There's no lack of information about the need. Native Americans and Alaska Natives are 2.2 times more likely to have diabetes than non-Hispanic whites, according to the American Diabetes Association. Native Americans in all 25 states with reportable data have obesity rates of more than 50 percent, according to a report released this month by the Trust for America's Health.

But it hasn't always been that way. Less than a century ago, diabetes was virtually unknown among Native Americans, according to the American Diabetes Association.

The problem has its genesis in the uprooting of Native Americans, said Johnson-Jennings, who is a member of the Choctaw tribe.

"For American Indians across the U.S., they were removed from their native food sources and provided with government commodities," she said. "These had very low nutritional value. They were kind of leftover foods."

For example, fry bread might be associated with Native American culture today, but it has nothing to do with Native American tradition, said Johnson-Jennings, who is on the faculty of the U of M College of Pharmacy.

"We didn't have flour ... at all," she said. "So that was always introduced and forced upon us as an effect of colonization."

The database Johnson-Jennings plans to lead development of will contain "wise practices within indigenous communities," she said. When it's completed, tribes will have ready access to data on what's working in other communities and will have the evidence they need when seeking money to adapt those practices locally.

The gift from the Shakopee Mdewakanton won't be enough to complete the task, she said. But it's a beginning, and will provide a base for seeking a larger grant, perhaps from the National Institutes of Health.

The Shakopee Mdewakanton gift also consists of two other projects:

- A series of annual national conferences to focus exclusively on Native American nutrition and food access. The first will take place next spring in the Twin Cities.
- A study led by University of Minnesota nutritionist Craig A. Hassel analyzing the obstacles between Western academic research and Native American traditional knowledge.

Direct Link: <http://www.duluthnewstribune.com/news/3891757-gift-will-aid-research-native-american-health-concerns>

U.S. same-sex marriage challenged by native American sovereignty

Native American groups aren't bound by the U.S. Constitution, so they aren't obliged to recognize same-sex marriages.



Pablo Cleo, left, is suing the Ak-Chin Indian Community in tribal court to have her marriage to Tara Roy-Pablo validated.

By: Felicia Fonseca The Associated Press, Published on Fri Nov 27 2015

FLAGSTAFF, ARIZ.—Cleo Pablo married her longtime partner when gay weddings became legal in Arizona and looked forward to the day when her wife and their children

could move into her home in the small native American community outside Phoenix where she grew up.

That day never came. The Ak-Chin Indian Community doesn't recognize same-sex marriages and has a law that prohibits unmarried couples from living together. So Pablo voluntarily gave up her tribal home and now is suing the tribe in tribal court to have her marriage validated.

"I want equal opportunity," Pablo said. "I want what every married couple has."

Pablo's situation reflects an overlooked storyline following the U.S. Supreme Court's historic decision this year that [legalized same-sex marriages nationwide](#): native American reservations are not bound by the decision and many continue to forbid same-sex marriages and deny insurance and other benefits.

The reasons vary and, to some extent, depend on cultural recognition of gender identification and roles, and the influence of outside religions, legal experts say. Other issues such as high unemployment, alcoholism and suicides on reservations also could be higher on the priority list, said Ann Tweedy, an associate professor at the Hamline University School of Law in St. Paul, Minn., who has studied tribes' marriage laws.

Advocacy groups largely have stayed away from pushing tribes for change, recognizing that tribes have the inherent right to regulate domestic relations within their boundaries.

"Tribal sovereignty is very important to tribes," Tweedy said. "They don't want to just adopt what the U.S. does."

Pablo follows in the footsteps of a handful of other tribal members in Oregon, Washington state and Michigan who lobbied their governments for marriage equality.

The Navajo Nation is one of a few of the country's 567 federally recognized tribes that have outright bans on same-sex marriage. Some tribes expressly allow it, while others tie marriage laws to those of states or have gender-neutral laws that typically create confusion for gay couples on whether they can marry.

The mishmash occurs because tribes live on sovereign lands where the U.S. Constitution does not apply.

But Pablo argues in her lawsuit that members of the Tribal Council are violating the Ak-Chin constitution by denying her equal protection and due process — rights also guaranteed under the federal Indian Civil Rights Act. Her lawyer, Sonia Martinez, said tribal members could have a persuasive argument against same-sex marriage bans if their tribe incorporated federal constitutional rights into tribal laws, which she says is the case on the Ak-Chin reservation.

The Ak-Chin Indian Community wouldn't comment directly on Pablo's lawsuit, but said marriage laws are a matter for the tribe to decide, not the U.S. Supreme Court.

"Whether our current law stays the same or needs to change, it must still be addressed in a manner that best promotes and protects the community's sovereignty and right of self-governance, and best reflects the culture, tradition and morals of the community and all of its members within the confines of our laws," read a statement provided to The Associated Press.

Direct Link: <http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2015/11/27/us-same-sex-marriage-challenged-by-native-american-sovereignty.html>

Rise in Native American rap, "Most authentic rap we have today," -Mic

By Ramona Marozas - [Biography](#)

November 27, 2015 Updated Nov 28, 2015 at 12:21 AM CST

Duluth, MN (NNCNOW.com) -- Many Native Americans feel they have been passed over for many years for significant roles in film, television and music.

Now there is a growing movement in Native music that is circumventing mainstream media – the rising popularity of Native rap.

In the heart of the Fond du Lac reservation, music DJ Pat Puchalla has found his beat.

"This is something that hits home – hits the people right then and there," Puchalla said.

On air at WGZS, the reservation's Native radio station, Puchalla plays both mainstream and Native music.

"We do play A Tribe Called Red. There are some artists that Alexis Sallee shares with the audience on her program Earthsongs. Keith Secola is one. A lot of other good Native artists as well," Puchalla said.

With his thumb on the pulse of Native culture, Puchalla says he is seeing a new rhythm rise on the music scene. A growing number of Native rappers are presenting CDs for him to play, but he is only able to air to some of them.

The station says only one of every 15 Native songs they play is Native rap. That is partly because some of the Native rap is profane and violent.

"I don't think it's going to be anything higher than five in the next year or so. It's the amount of the artist as well – as it may not have clicked here as of recent," Puchalla said.

But Native rap groups are getting more play elsewhere. Through YouTube, their otherwise unheard voice has a channel, and a growing number of views.

Native group A Tribe Called Red is one of the most popular. Their song "Electric Pow Wow" has 3.6 million views. And they are not the only Native group racking up the hits.

"Breaking into mainstream is incredibly difficult for every artist. It's very difficult to get the audience base. Social media has become a very vital force for these movements as a way to organize," Tom Barnes, a music editor at the New York news website Mic, said.

Barnes calls Native rap one of the "purest forms of hip-hop since it was invented in Harlem." Barnes says while some Native rap is violent, most stays true to the original principles of hip-hop – spreading a message through music.

"These people were here on this land first, and you know, can probably speak to the histories, traditions and the connection with that – with the environment – to a much greater degree," Barnes said.

For Red Lake member Zhooniya Ogitchida, rap is a way to set a positive example for younger generations.

"We're trying to like build role models that kids can look up to. If we can do it you can do it type of thing," Ogitchida said.

Ogitchida is signed to a Native record label, but says it is still hard to get his music out. He travels to spread his work. We met him at a recent stop in Duluth.

"We have a choice, we don't have to live and dwell in the environments around us. If you want to pursue that with a deeper passion then you can do anything, going all over the nation," Ogitchida said.

Combining traditional values with modern beats, Native rappers are giving a culture which often struggles to be heard a stage.

"A lot of people don't hear that too often – like pow wow music with some 808 beat. There are a couple of bands out there doing that too, but I think Native hip-hop in general is its own thing right now. It's going mainstream – Native rap is original," Ogitchida said.

Ogitchida is part of a hip-hop rap group called The Council which won "Best Hip-Hop Recording of the Year" at the Native American Music Awards in New York last November.

Here are some of the Native rappers that Barnes highlighted in an [article](#):

- [A Tribe Called Red](#)

- [Drezus](#)

- [SupaMan](#)

- [Red Cloud](#)

- [Frank Wahn](#)

Direct Link: <http://www.northlandsnewscenter.com/news/local/Rise-in-Native-American-rap-Most-authentic-rap-we-have-today--Mic-355780841.html>

Shenandoah and Its Native American Roots

December 01, 2015 16:42 UTC



Many nature lovers head to Shenandoah National Park in the U.S. state of Virginia. One of the stories explaining the name Shenandoah is as beautiful as the name sounds. (COURTESY PHOTO)

11/28/2015

Shenandoah: A Native American Story

Hello and welcome to the VOA Learning English program, Words and Their Stories.

Every word has its own story. Where did it come from? How did it get into the language?

Today's word in "Shenandoah."

Hundreds of years ago a Native American chief named Shenandoah lived with his tribes in what is now the state of Virginia. Little is known about Shenandoah, but in some way, the soft sound of his name was given to a river.

The Shenandoah River still flows in a deep valley between the Allegheny and Blue Ridge Mountains, just as it did when Chief Shenandoah lived. It is a slow moving river, soft and as beautiful as its name.

There are some word experts who believe the word “Shenandoah” means “spruce river” because the waters of the river run through great forests of spruce trees.

And this explanation could be correct.

However, there is an old Native American story which is far more beautiful than that of the experts.

Long ago, centuries before Europeans came to the New World, there was a great lake of **sparkling** blue water hidden in the mountains of Virginia. This lake was 250 kilometers long and 50 kilometers wide.

For hundreds of years, Native American tribes lived near this lake, feeding on the fish from its clean waters.

The Native Americans often climbed up the mountains and camped there during their long hunts for food. In the evenings they sat near their camp and looked down at the beautiful lake.

On a clear, starry night you could see thousands of stars shining and dancing on the water below. The Native Americans loved this lake, and because they could see the stars in it they called the lake, “Clear Daughter of the Stars.”

In their language, the word for this was “Shenandoah.”

One day there was a loud crashing sound at one end of the lake. The lake started to disappear. Its water ran out of the valley, through a break in the mountain side. The waters ran on and on until they joined another river which today is known as the Potomac.

At last, the lake was gone. In its place was only a river. It is this way today. The lake is gone, but the beautiful Shenandoah River runs on.

And on a clear night, anyone in the mountains can still see the stars dancing on the water.

Shenandoah National Park, a place for nature lovers



This is one of the cascading waterfall located in the Shenandoah valley.

Shenandoah National Park has just over 80,000 hectares of protected lands. The park has **cascading** waterfalls, beautiful mountain **vistas** and **serene** woods.

Located outside of Washington, DC, the Shenandoah National Park is a popular **get-away** for people wanting to hike, picnic or nature-watch.

Millions of Americans have seen the Shenandoah and have talked about it.

And some years ago, someone wrote a song about it.

“Shenandoah” is perhaps one of America’s most recognizable folk songs. Some say the song refers to the river. Others say it is about the daughter of Chief Shenandoah.

Regardless of what the song is about, "Shenandoah" remains an American classic.

“O Shenandoah, I love your daughter, Away you rolling river; O Shenandoah, I love your daughter, Away I'm bound to go, 'Cross the wide Missouri ...”

And that brings us to the end of this episode of Words and Their Stories.

I'm Anna Matteo.

This Words and Their Stories was written by Herbert Suttcliffe, with revisions by Anna Matteo. The Norwegian soprano, Sissel, sings the version of "Shenandoah" heard in this program.

Now it's your turn! Practice with the adjectives "sparkling," "dancing," "cascading" and "serene" to describe a nature scene where you live.

Direct Link: <http://learningenglish.voanews.com/content/article/3077653.html>

Native American Tribe Bets On Olive Oil

Updated December 1, 2015 11:28 AM ET
Lisa Morehouse



The Yocha Dehe tribe grows, mills and markets its own extra-virgin olive oil. The tribe's mill uses top-of-the-line equipment imported from Florence, Italy.

The bucolic Capay Valley is about an hour outside Sacramento, Calif., and its ranches, alfalfa fields and small, organic produce farms have earned it a reputation as an agricultural gem. It's pretty serene, except for the cacophony inside the valley's most lucrative business, the Cache Creek Casino.

That casino — and the huge crowds it attracts on any given night — has been a source of tension between local farmers and the tiny California Indian tribe which runs it, the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation. But it's because of the casino's success that the Yocha Dehe can fund its newest venture, across the highway: the tribe's own brand of olive oil — bottled in a state-of-the-art facility.

It's harvest time, and at one small farm in the valley, workers rake olives off branches on to a net which they dump into bins. The fruit is trucked just down the road and pressed into oil at the Yocha Dehe's olive mill, in equipment imported from Florence, Italy. About 40 growers from the region process their olives here.

About a decade ago, former Tribal Chairman Marshall McKay visited the olive center at nearby University of California, Davis.

"They had this fascinating tale of quality and quantity and the healing benefits of good fresh oil," he says, "and [that] it may be a burgeoning market in California."

Now the Yocha Dehe tribe is at the forefront: It's growing, milling and marketing extra-virgin olive oil. Though only in its fifth year of production, the olive oil is used in over 200 restaurants — including the famed Chez Panisse. A premium version of the oil, called Seka Hills, is sold in specialty shops and upscale farmers markets.



Olive trees belonging to the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, with their Cache Creek Casino in the background.

The olives are new, but the Yocha Dehe and other Native American groups thrived in villages here for thousands of years before European contact.

McKay says, "People, outsiders came into the valley: Gold Rush prospectors, cattle ranchers, soldiers." His ancestors fled to the hills, but many were still massacred.

"We were in the way, so we were removed," he says. "It was genocide. It just hasn't been talked about in history."

Those who survived were relocated to barren land, a way of slowly killing the tribe, according to McKay.

"I grew up in severe poverty," says James Kinter, Yocha Dehe's tribal secretary. "Growing up here on the reservation, we used to go pick walnuts on the side of the road for dinner sometimes. My mom, she used to work in the fields, worked as a waitress. She was a single mom, raising three children, and everybody was kind of in that situation in the tribe."

In the 1980s, laws regulating Indian gaming began to loosen, and the tribe opened a bingo hall. Kinter was 5 years old. "It was great, just to see people get excited about something, and it brought us together as a tribe," he says.

They expanded, eventually opening the casino — which averages 2,000 visitors daily, swelling traffic on the valley's two-lane highway, and reportedly earning hundreds of millions of dollars a year for the tribe.

McKay says to keep the approximately 100 tribal members grounded and engaged despite their newfound wealth, they receive higher incomes if they've graduated from high school, or work, or attend college full-time. Or, as he puts it, "Are you doing something for yourself instead of just waiting for a handout?"



At a neighboring farm in the Capay Valley, workers dump just-picked olives into a bin. They'll be milled within hours at the Yocha Dehe mill just down the road.

But casino development made waves with some neighbors. When the casino expanded in 2002, protesters drove tractors up and down the valley's small highway, citing concerns about increased traffic on rural roads.

Tom Frederick and his wife own Capay Valley Vineyards and Winery, right next door to the casino. As farmers, he says, the tribe is doing a great job. "They do the best of everything," he says, adding, "I don't begrudge them that."

But he is frustrated that, because they're a native sovereign nation, some Yocha Dehe operations — like the casino and its adjoining golf course — operate under different regulations than the rest of the valley. "It's a concentration of money and power, so we just seek some kind of balance," Frederick says. He and his wife are part of a group voicing concerns about the possibility of more casino-related development in the future, and how that could impact the agricultural character of the valley.

Down the valley at Capay Organics, co-owner Thaddeus Barsotti has a different take. He grew up going to school with tribe members, in tougher times. "I think it's a cool story anytime you see people not having a lot and taking advantage of the opportunities they're given and ending with more than they had. That's the American dream, right?" he says.

Former tribal chairman Marshall McKay says with the Yocha Dehe opening up the olive oil mill, and working in agriculture, tensions with their farming neighbors in the Capay Valley have eased. After all, they're all in the same line of work now.

"That wasn't like that a few years ago," he says. "People weren't looking at us in the eye. We weren't looking at them in the eye, and now that's changed."

Direct Link: <http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/11/29/456833557/native-american-tribe-bets-on-olive-oil>

Famed chef helps Kansas Native Americans cope with diabetes

Class organized by AARP Kansas and the four American Indian tribes in Kansas

Posted: November 28, 2015 - 4:18pm



Richard Hetzler former head chef of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian's Mitsitam Cafe, shows students of the fifth annual Intertribal Solutions: A Recipe for Better Health cooking class a bulb of fennel, one of the ingredients they will use to create a dinner intended to reduce diabetes among Native Americans.

By [Bill Blankenship](#)

MAYETTA — A diagnosis of diabetes isn't a life sentence to a diet of bland food, said Richard Hetzler, the former chef of Mitsitam, the critically acclaimed cafe within the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.

Hetzler spoke in one of the kitchens of the Prairie Band Casino & Resort where, on Nov. 5-6, he taught cooking classes for Native Americans at the fifth annual Intertribal Solutions: A Recipe for Better Health program.

Hetzler and Melvin Gonzalez, who was chef de cuisine at Mitsitam and serves in the same role at Ovvio, the Italian restaurant in Fairfax, Va., which Hetzler co-owns, were putting the finishing touches on the three-course, plated dinner the students had prepared.

The menu consisted of celery root puree with crispy fennel and an olive oil drizzle as the first course. Braised buffalo shank served with sun-dried tomato whipped potatoes and sauteed kale was the main course. That was followed by dessert: sweet potato galette topped with a vanilla-infused honey caramel and whipped cream.

Hetzler, who still oversees Mitsitam's menu, explained the purpose of the class: "How can we help Native Americans with diabetes realize food can still be food. It doesn't have to be bland. It doesn't have to be tasteless. It doesn't have to be something they look at and say, 'I really don't want to eat that.' "

The idea of inviting Hetzler to teach cooking classes for Native Americans in Kansas started with a conversation five years ago between Maren Turner, director of AARP Kansas, and DeAnn Deroin, a Kickapoo Nation Health Center physician and member of the Association of American Indian Physicians.

Andrea Bozarth, AARP Kansas director of community outreach, said Turner and Deroin realized their organizations had overlapping goals of wanting to reduce complications of diabetes among Native Americans, who have the highest age-adjusted prevalence of diabetes among all U.S. racial and ethnic groups.

A cooking class taught by a chef of Hetzler's background and renown proved successful.

"He was a huge draw to the people we were trying to reach," Bozarth said.

Initially funded through a four-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the course is now supported financially by all four Native American tribes in Kansas: the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, near White Cloud; the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas, near Horton; the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, near Mayetta; and the Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska, near Reserve.

Before donning their aprons and taking a new set of knives into the kitchen, class participants sat through a presentation on healthy eating then got up and learned some exercises since increased physical activity can help diabetics cope with the disease.

Once in the kitchen, Hetzler introduced the students, all Native Americans, to the raw ingredients for the meal, which he said should all be readily available even though some might not be familiar. Not everyone had ever cooked with the celery root and fennel that would go into the soup course.

Five years ago at the first cooking class, Hetzler said, none of those students had ever seen a golden beet, which was part of that year's menu.

"I like to push their comfort zone a little," said Hetzler. However, he added he also made sure each dish on the menu only had a few ingredients and simple steps in its preparation so "everybody can do it."

Hetzler took time to show students some basic knife skills, such as how to chop an onion. The students used those skills to prepare the vegetables and herbs that topped the buffalo shanks, which they dredged in seasoned flour and braised before covering them and the vegetables in beef broth and roasting them in a 325-degree oven for 2½ hours.

The cooking technique for the buffalo shanks are the same, Hetzler said, as those used to make veal osso bucco, a classic Italian dish.

Hetzler said his goal was for the students to create a meal worthy of a great restaurant, but to leave the class thinking, “You know, I can make this at home for my family.”

“I think the biggest goal is letting people know food is approachable whether you have diabetes or whether you’re trying to eat healthier or just trying to do something different,” Hetzler said.

Direct Link: <http://cjonline.com/life/arts-entertainment/2015-11-28/famed-chef-helps-kansas-native-americans-cope-diabetes>

Op-ed: Bishop is wrong, Utah’s Native Americans want Bears Ears protected

By Herman Daniels Jr.

First Published Nov 28 2015 08:12PM • Last Updated Nov 28 2015 08:12 pm

Recently, a number of people have tried to speak on behalf of Native Americans who live in Utah — including those of us who are Navajo and live in San Juan County.

False statements have been made to the media, claiming that the proposal put forward last month by five tribes — Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Ute Mountain Ute and Uintah Ouray Ute — to protect the Bears Ears as a national monument is not supported by native communities and local people in San Juan County.

As one of two council delegates on the 23rd Navajo Nation Council who represent Utah Navajos — I represent the Utah communities of Naa'tsis'Áán (Navajo Mountain) and Oljato (Monument Valley) — I can tell you that these reports of division among Utah Navajos are not accurate. As a council delegate, I am glad to see that the Bears Ears initiative has moved forward in the preferred manner, originating first from the grassroots and our esteemed elders and then through the political channels to Window Rock and then on to Washington, D.C.

I recognize that many people may be unaware of how the Navajo Nation is politically organized, so let me explain.

The fundamental building block of Navajo democracy is the Chapter House. There are 110 Chapter Houses on the Navajo Nation, with seven that extend into Utah. Chapter houses are community centers where residents discuss and decide upon matters that affect their communities. Official business is conducted in our Native language according to the Navajo Nation Local Governance Act. Issues include everything from approving government budgets, securing clean drinking water after the Gold King mine spill, and

considering proposals such as protecting Bears Ears. Chapter Houses are also the place where local residents are given the opportunity to express their opinions to their Council Delegate, such as myself.

Thus, if you want to know what people "on the ground" think about a subject, it is a good idea to ask for the community to vote on it during a Chapter House meeting. And it is here, not in the media, that it becomes clear that the Navajo people who live in San Juan County overwhelmingly support the creation of a 1.9 million acre Bears Ears National Monument.

Of the seven Navajo Chapter Houses in Utah, six have passed resolutions in support of protecting Bears Ears. As recently as November 8, the Oljato Chapter House unanimously (40-0) reaffirmed its support for protecting Bears Ears as a national monument.

Normally, delegates like to see consensus on issues such as the protection of Bears Ears, but this is not always possible. For example, the community of Aneth endorsed the position of San Juan County in August and supports mineral extraction across large swaths of federal lands inside Bears Ears. It is not unusual for this kind of disagreement to exist, but in this case San Juan County violated normal consultation protocol by asking the Chapter House to endorse its official government position after the fact. Typically Native American tribes insist on being engaged before important decisions are made and San Juan County did not do this.

In comparison, Utah Diné Bikéyah followed Navajo procedures when it obtained resolutions of support from all seven chapters to carry out its land planning effort in 2010. Then it developed a proposal with full community input and eventually won the approval of all seven chapters in 2014. Then, after this consensus was secured in Utah, it then asked for the support of the Navajo Nation Council and the president, which was granted wholeheartedly. This contrasts profoundly with the actions of San Juan County Commissioner Rebecca Benally, who began going against Chapter Houses more than one year after they had studied San Juan County's five alternatives and had endorsed Bears Ears.

In an Oct. 29 interview on KSL Radio's Doug Wright show, Utah Rep. Rob Bishop stated that in the Public Lands Initiative process, he "need[s] to give precedence to the Native Americans who live in Utah." As a council delegate representing Utah, I could not agree more and I can assure the congressman that he has local Navajo support in protecting Bears Ears.

If Bishop agrees to give precedence to the Native Americans who live in Utah, then he should understand that we have already spoken, and with overwhelming unity we have asked for Bears Ears to be protected. Local Navajo communities have the sovereign support of the Navajo Nation government and we understand that other tribes are similarly supporting their grassroots people. What we have said, and continue to say, is this: It is time to protect Bears Ears, and if it can't be passed in the coming months

through the Public Lands Initiative, then the president should declare this living cultural landscape as a national monument for all.

Herman Daniels Jr. is a Navajo Nation Council Delegate representing Shonto, Naa'tsis'Áán, Oljato and Ts'ah Bii Kin.

Direct Link: <http://www.sltrib.com/opinion/3234452-155/op-ed-bishop-is-wrong-utahs-native>

This Holiday, Be a Big Brother or Big Sister

[Bobbi Rose Nez](#)

11/29/15

is Native American Heritage Month and is a welcomed opportunity for me to share about a program I believe is strengthening our Native American communities one youth at a time. Mentoring has been a long tradition in Native American cultures where the importance of family, storytelling and traditions are viewed as core values. Big Brothers Big Sisters is an extension of these core values as a formal mentoring opportunity providing children in the community with a role model.

I began volunteering 13 years ago with Big Brothers Big Sisters, a non-profit organization that promotes positive mentoring relationships for adults and children ages 6 to 18. The young people, who are referred to as Littles, and their mentors, who are referred to as Bigs, are paired based on a variety of factors including similar interests, proximity and any preferences a Big or Little may have. For example, a Big or a Little and their family may have a preference to match to an individual who has a similar background because it may solidify a deeper bond between the two, a truth I have personally experienced.

Born and raised on the Navajo Nation it has always been important for me to be able to give back to the Native American community so I had a preference to match to a Native Little. I've been matched with my current 'little' for the past seven years and she is of Navajo and Cheyenne descent and is a registered member of the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT). Based on our Navajo clan system, we're cousins and as such, we're able to connect more easily, discuss our families, cultural practices and desires to give back to our Native communities.

Arizona is home to 22 tribes and four of the Native American communities are located in the Valley. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona (BBBSAZ) is an advocate for acknowledging the rich culture and contributions of the organization's Native neighbors and has created a Native American Mentoring Initiative that serves our Native American

youth and provides a formal mentoring opportunity for Native American high school students and adults.

BBBSAZ currently has three site-based programs specifically serving our Native American communities in the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, and urban Natives in Mesa.

Our proven effective mentoring practices are combined with a tribal community focus. The program runs under the guidance of Big Brothers Big Sisters staff, community organizations, and community members to best serve a tribe's existing needs, structure, and cultural values.

In addition to providing a much-needed mentor to a young person, the program also benefits the Big. As a Big, I'm able to introduce my Little to fun activities and lend support during her challenging times. In return, I'm given a firsthand look at the activities from her perspective and the chance to watch her grow into a happy and productive young woman.

The latter has proven to be one of my favorite rewards of the volunteer process as I've witnessed my current 'little' transition from a shy 9-year old to a confident teenager in leadership roles and even participating in the first-ever Tribal Youth Summit hosted by the White House. In fact, one of my favorite memories with my Little was when we were able to travel to Fairbanks, Ala. in 2013 for a conference and learn about the Alaskan Native culture.

Currently, BBBSAZ is serving 78 Native American children and has 45 Native American mentors volunteering in our program but I believe we can do more!

I encourage all adults, particularly males, in the Native American community to rise to the challenge and volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona or a BBBS organization near you. We need you to lend your time and share your life lessons with our young people. Doing so will assure them that there is someone nearby that cares about their future and the future of their communities.

Learn more about the organization and its Native American mentoring programs [here](#).

Bobbi Rose Nez is a 'Big Sister' volunteer and a Tribal Partnership Coordinator at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona. She has worked with youth, as well as the non-profit sector, for more than 10 years. Nez currently resides in Tempe, Ariz.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/11/29/holiday-be-big-brother-or-big-sister>

Argentina's Indigenous Communities Want Their Land Back

While Kirchner Has Ignored Demands for 9 Months, Macri Promises Dialogue

[Belén Marty](#) November 30, 2015 at 3:21 pm



Representatives from Argentina's indigenous communities, including women and children, live at the encampment in the middle of Buenos Aires. (*PanAm Post*)

[Español](#) The next president of Argentina, Mauricio Macri, will have much more to worry about than tackling the country's problems related to high inflation, the fiscal debt, and systemic poverty.

For nearly nine months now, 25 representatives from Argentina's indigenous communities — Qom, Pilagá, Wichi, and Nivaclé — have camped at the heart of Buenos Aires calling for a meeting with President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner to demand the restitution of land they claim once belonged to them.

Located a few blocks away from the Ministry of Social Development and the governor's mansion, the encampment has a capacity of 50 and is covered by a sky-blue and white tent. The site includes seven portable toilets. Pots and pans with the remains of recently cooked food, worn mattresses, and clothes and bed sheets drying in the sun are easily seen from the street. Banners with inscriptions of resistance and flags with the colors of the indigenous communities also proudly garnish the area.

All of this contrasts greatly with the business suits and dress shoes that quickly pass through the outskirts of the business district at the intersection of May and July 9 Avenue.



Banners like this one decorate the urban campsite. (*PanAm Post*)

The group's leader, Félix Díaz, explained several months ago that they are at the campsite to demand the government's return of land stolen from them decades ago. They also request, in reference to the right to self-determination, that the government notify them in matters concerning natural resources and compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

"We want to return [to our community] with an answer. It's what the women and ancestors of our community want. This encampment doesn't have a deadline," [assured](#) the spokesman for the Wichí tribe, Jorge Palomo, after completing six months at the site.

He also criticized the current administration: "They kill us with indifference and discrimination."

Despite the Kirchner administration's lack of action, the group finds support in ecological and social organizations, and universities.

"The government has searched for a way to divide the people," Díaz [maintains](#). "In 1979, we were dispossessed, when the province transferred our indigenous territory to the National Parks. We lost 50 hectares of land, which was very critical to us. No one knew how to lead the commission, because the tribe's chief didn't know how to read or write. Our chief unknowingly signed some papers, which ultimately transferred a part of our land to the government. He didn't know what he was doing."

For the Qom community, November 3 marked an important milestone: then presidential candidate and now President-elect Mauricio Macri [visited](#) the campsite and spoke with Díaz about the communities' problems.

Díaz told Macri that he has tried to meet with President Kirchner for two years, but only managed to meet with officials that "continue to lie with unkept promises."

According to the indigenous leader, Macri signed a pact stating that if he won the election, he would begin a dialogue with the indigenous peoples without intermediaries, and "leave the Institute of Indigenous Affairs in the hands of its people."

"The Land Is Our Land"

Narciso Sanagachi, leader of the encampment, spoke with the *PanAm Post* about its demand for the restitution of land. Two street dogs sat by his side harassing onlookers.



Narciso Sanagachi spoke with the *PanAm Post* on November 22. (*PanAm Post*)

“We’ve been here for a while demanding the land that is ours. Not once has the president met with us,” he says.

Concerning Marcri’s visit, he notes that “he was the only politician that approached us. But we’re not politicians. We come to reclaim our territory and nothing more.”

Sanagachi says that what they request is the government returning the territories that originally belonged to his ancestors. “The territory is ours; it belongs to all of the indigenous peoples. There was 5,000 hectares before the governor of Formosa stole 1,500 hectares in order to sell it. Now they want to take all of our land again to sell it. That’s why we are here. We are fighting.”

He also says that the governor of Formosa province, Gildo Insfrán, wants to make deals “with other countries.”

“We don’t have title to the property [of our territory], because in that epoch the government never gave the tribe’s chief title to the territory. Now, people enter the area without permission, because there is no title. But it was always our land.” Sanagachi adds.

The camp’s leader also says that, in June, they conducted a [protest](#) which was attended by representatives of 15 provinces with indigenous peoples. “When the summit finished, we marched in front of the Casa Rosada [presidential estate] to deliver our demand. Cabinet Chief Aníbal Fernández and Minister of the Interior and Transportation Florencio Randazzo were there,” he says. “They spoke for 10 minutes and later said ‘we are going to return,’ and when they left the demonstration, the officials never came back.”

Direct Link: <http://panampost.com/belen-marty/2015/11/30/argentinas-indigenous-communities-want-their-land-back/>

In NYC, Native American Students Celebrate Indigenous Films, Filmmakers

[Genesis Tuyuc](#)

11/30/15

Let's talk Native American Heritage Month 2015 - because it ends today. And let's talk indigenous filmmaking, and New York City.

Earlier this month, the Native American and Indigenous Students' Group (NAISG) at New York University, guided by many mentors, hosted several days of Native American films and filmmakers to highlight indigenous storytelling.

It was packed house a few weeks ago at the second annual Native American and Indigenous Film Festival. The event opened with the group's Vice President, Andrew Begay, a junior in the College of Arts and Science studying French and Linguistics. The moderator for the night, Dr. Amalia Cordova, Assistant Director of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies and filmmaker, introduced the first short narrative film, *Sikumi*, directed and written by Iñupiaq filmmaker and Professor Andrew MacLean. The film, which is the first film to be told entirely in the Iñupiaq language, depicts the story of Apuna, an Inuit hunter, who searches for seal, but instead witnesses a murder. He is then forced to navigate his own morality.

It was then followed by the New York City premiere of Angelo Baca's feature documentary film, *Into America: The Ancestor's Land*, which depicted the story of Angelo Baca's grandmother, Helen Yellowman, through her own reflections and words in the Navajo language as they road tripped back to their rightful and ancestral home. Both films were applauded for their beauty, distinct from one another, yet similar in that they told intricate and compelling stories.



A panel with several of the filmmakers and organizers on the second day of the second annual Native American and Indigenous Film Festival at New York University. Photo courtesy Genesis Tuyuc.

The conversation that ensued the pair of films was refreshing, exhilarating even. Topics ranged from the importance of Native American people behind and in front of the lens, to ethical and legal rights of intellectual and cultural property. Audience members asked intriguing questions that further propelled the conversation forward.

“The opening day for this film festival was heartening and uplifting because we didn't know the real interest of the NYC community to see indigenous cinema and both days. It was at max capacity to standing room,” Baca stated. “Not only did they show up, but they demanded this kind of film representation, where we are underrepresented, in such a diverse city by the sheer turnout.”

This film festival was not just a gathering of people watching films; it was a statement to New York City, but, more specifically, to NYU. Indigenous students hailing from all over the world are present and active at New York University.

As one of the film festival's organizers, I believe an Indigenous Studies Program is vital and needed on NYU's campus, and the students will continue to work towards that goal. The film festival is one way of knowing that the NYC community feels the same.

“As an ally, I think folks like me need to find ways to support the agendas of indigenous peoples, rather than impose our own,” said Amanda Foote, producer of the Nakoda AV Club, studying in the Museum Studies Certificate program at NYU. “The indigenous students at NYU decided they wanted to have this festival, so I used whatever skills I could to support NAISG and make that happen.”

And this was only the first day.

The second day was opened and moderated by Professor Andrew MacLean, who emphasized the importance of an indigenous film festival in New York City, and how it has been dearly missed since the hiatus in 2011 of the National Museum of the American Indian's Native American Film & Video Festival.

Day two included narrative and documentary short films by Alex Lazarowich and Tanis Parenteau, Doris Loayza, Blackhorse Lowe, Keith Taylor, Angelo Baca, Kevin Lance Littlefeather, Long Tut, Kez Left-Hand, and the Nakoda AudioVisual Club from Alberta, Canada.

The panel included Baca, director of *Breaktime is Over* and *Mulheres Na Capoeira*, two of the film festival organizers, Amanda Foote and myself, and Charlie Uruchima, guest-host of Tiokasin Ghosthorse's radio program *First Voices Radio*, representing Doris Loayza's film, *Bronx Llaktamanta*, and Keith Taylor, director of *The Last Day*.

“It is an honor to be a part of the 2015 NYU Native American and Indigenous Second Annual Film Festival, to have a platform to showcase my work, *The Last Day*, among

many talented Native American and indigenous filmmakers,” Taylor said. “I see this festival becoming larger than life as years go by and that more Native artists are being recognized for their work to be shown to the world. There is a life and story to be told from our people.”

Although the film festival was only two days, love for indigenous film was felt all throughout. It is this love that fuels us, the organizers, to continue to push the boundaries in our own art and work together to create a better and more inclusive film festival next year.

“It’s important that our stories are shown everywhere.” Lowe, Navajo filmmaker and director of the short film, *Shimásáni*, said. “Film is an immediate delivery device of ideas and culture. It reflects who we are at this moment - our emotions, our languages, our way of living in this world. This film festival is a great venue for showcasing these films.”

Genesis Tuyuc (Maya Kaqchikel), born and raised in NYC, is a fiction writer, filmmaker and community organizer. She is an alumnus of New York University, where she studied Linguistics and Creative Writing.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/11/30/nyc-native-american-students-celebrate-indigenous-films-filmmakers-162608>

Should Colorado public schools be allowed to use Native American mascots?

Governo's Commission is meeting with schools

[Russell Haythorn](#)

10:20 PM, Nov 30, 2015

11:18 PM, Nov 30, 2015



Should public schools in Colorado be allowed to use Native American mascots? The nationwide issue is once again taking center stage in Colorado.

The Governor's Commission on Indian Representation met at Strasburg High School Monday night.

Strasburg's mascot is the Indians and its logo features the facial profile of a Native American in a large headdress.

"We want to be respectful," said Strasburg High School principal, Jeff Rasp. "And we don't want any part of what we portray to be disrespectful to anyone."

Inside the school Monday, the crowd was split into tables where small group discussions were held with commission members.

"(Our logo) is respectful," said Rasp. "It's not a caricature. I think we've tried to bring honor and respect to the tribes. We know that any Indian mascot may be considered derogatory. We just feel like ours is not."

Strasburg High school senior Lindsey Nichols is appointed to the commission. For the past year, she has been reaching out to tribes like the northern Arapahoe and southern Cheyenne who are both native to Strasburg.

"They've been positive about our depictions around the school," Nichols said. "And I've really learned a lot from their perspectives. I learned more from them than I could in any history book."

And that's perhaps the most important point of the commission. Start the dialogue about why Native Americans are used as mascots and how the practice should continue from here.

"I think there are some great examples, like Arapahoe High School, like Strasburg High School - that are working with tribal nations," said Ernest House, Jr., the executive director of the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs.

But some have been critical of other schools like Eaton, where the mascot is more of a caricature than an artist's rendition – and Lamar, where the mascot is the Savages.

"The history of that community, those tribes – has been lost over time," said House.

In Strasburg, they're proud of their mascot, but sensitive as well. They're even incorporating some of Nichols research and findings into their curriculum.

"I don't know if you'll ever be able to have one objective answer to whether these mascots are okay," said Nichols. "There are some tribal members who say it's never okay."

The meeting in Strasburg Monday night was the first of five such meetings at five different high schools over the next five months. The next meeting is at Lamar High School. In April, the commission is due to report its recommendations to the governor and the state legislature.

Direct Link: <http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/local-news/should-colorado-public-schools-be-allowed-to-use-native-american-mascots>

'Very, Very Disturbing': Native American Veteran Dies in Police Custody

[Simon Moya-Smith](#)

12/1/15

A Native American man died in holding cell in Juneau, Alaska, after prison staff there allegedly told him "You could die right now and I don't care," according to a newly [released report](#) reviewing the state's department of corrections.

Joseph Murphy, 49, of the Yup'ik people, was booked at 7 p.m. August 13 for intoxication at the Lemon Creek Correctional Center and was placed in a holding cell for the evening, Lisa Phu of Juneau's KTOO Public Media [reported](#). A video reviewed by the state shows a sober Murphy at 5:20 a.m. the next morning, but he appeared sweaty and and complained of chest pains to jail staff. Murphy allegedly denied medical assistance.

According to the report, Murphy had begun to bang on the cell door when one of the jail staff members responded. Murphy and the guard then engaged in a heated verbal exchange with each other. The staff member allegedly told Murphy "I don't care. You could die right now and I don't care."

At 0602 Staff 3 responded to Mr. Murphy banging his cell door and yelling. According to Staff 3, Mr. Murphy said he needed his pills but did not say what they were for. Staff 3 reports telling Mr. Murphy that his banging was agitating, and he should knock it off, suck it up, and he would be getting out soon.

At approximately the same time, Staff 4 reports hearing an inmate and Staff 3 yelling "f--- you" at each other. Staff 4 reports hearing the inmate saying he needed medical care, and heard Staff 3 say, "I don't care, you could die right now and I don't care." This was followed, according to Staff 4, by more "f--- you's." Staff 4 later identified the inmate as Mr. Murphy.

Photo courtesy gov.alaska.gov

Less than 20 minutes later, Murphy is seen pacing the cell; he drops to his knees, pats his chest, falls and dies only 12 hours after being booked, KTOO reported.

Murphy died of an apparent heart attack.

Dean Williams, special assistant to Alaska Governor Bill Walker, watched the footage and said "It's compelling video, very, very disturbing."

Murphy should not have been jailed in the first place, according to the report. In accordance with state law, since he was intoxicated, Murphy should have been placed on 12-hour temporary protective custody.

Williams said it makes no sense to jail intoxicated persons.

"Just the whole practice of taking highly intoxicated individuals, some that are detoxing, and placing them in a prison where they are going to receive far less attention is not a good plan," he told KTOO.



Joseph Murphy and an identified woman. Photo courtesy juneauempire.com.

Murphy, who was born in Anchorage according to his [obituary](#), was an Iraq veteran who earned the name "Eskimo Joe" while serving.

Mike Mercer, who served with Murphy, [told](#) KTOO he learned the basics from Murphy — from marching to shining his shoes. The pair were gunners in the Alaska Army National Guard.

"Murph just worked harder than everybody else it seemed like, just because he was always giving as much as he could give," Mercer told KTOO. "He definitely took care of the guy to his left and to his right. If somebody needed more water, if somebody needed somebody to talk to, if somebody needed some help with anything, Murph was really supportive of people."

Murphy was also a volunteer firefighter and ambulance attendant, his obituary states.

The state report looked into 24 cases resulting in death while in custody. Fifteen of have died since Walker took office. Walker called the findings "very disturbing."

"The [cases] that were looked into were not done adequately," Walker said.

Due to the shocking report, Walker [announced](#) last month that Department of Corrections Commissioner Ron Taylor tendered his resignation.

The video of Murphy's last moments have not been released to the public.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/12/01/very-very-disturbing-native-american-veteran-dies-police-custody-162620>

U.S. House votes to rename Nisqually Refuge after Native-American leader Billy Frank Jr.

By [Joel Connelly](#) on December 1, 2015 at 10:48 AM

We honor and cherish today those we put in jail years ago.

The U.S. House of Representatives voted late Monday to rename the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge after Billy Frank Jr., the champion of Native-American treaty rights arrested more than 50 times in the 1950's and 1960's for illegally fishing on the river.



Billy Frank Jr. near Frank's Landing on the Nisqually River. Frank, a Nisqually tribal elder who was arrested dozens of times while trying to assert his native fishing rights in the 1960's.

The vote honoring Frank came on the 60th anniversary of the day when an African-American woman, weary from a long day's work, refused to surrender her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Ala., city bus. The arrest of Rosa Parks helped trigger a civil rights movement that changed America.

"What Martin Luther King Jr., meant to civil rights, what Nelson Mandela meant to South Africa, Billy Frank Jr., meant to the entire Northwest," Rep. Denny Heck, D-Wash., a friend of Frank, said in an emotional House floor speech.

Heck explained that Frank not only championed fishing rights, guaranteed under the 1854 Medicine Creek treaty, but also worked to restore decimated salmon runs. (The Northwest is defined as every place to which a salmon can swim, author Timothy Egan once wrote.)

“He got along with everyone: He was open and inclusive,” said Heck. “His story is in the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.”

The House did a roll call vote on renaming of the refuge. It passed on a vote of 413-2. The two “No” votes were cast by Reps. James Sensenbrenner, R-Wis., and Justin Amash, R-Mich.

One of the few House members to miss the vote was Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, R-Wash., who represents a Southwest Washington district that formerly included the Nisqually.



Rep. Denny Heck, D-Wash.: “I loved him like a beloved uncle.

The legislation calls for erection of a national memorial to mark signing of the Medicine Creek Treaty, the first Indian treaty signed in the state of Washington.

The wildlife refuge, just off Interstate 5 north of Olympia, has become a laboratory of salmon restoration. With money secured by then-U.S. Rep. Norm Dicks, D-Wash., old dikes at the mouth of the river were removed in the last decade, re-creating salt water estuaries where young salmon can grow up before migrating to the Pacific Ocean.

Even the Bush administration’s notoriously unresponsive Interior Secretary Gale Norton seemed impressed when she witnessed the reborn estuary. The current U.S. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell listened to Frank at a symposium in Suquamish less than two weeks before his death.

Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash. It is expected to pass as early as this week.

Last week, President Obama bestowed the Presidential Medal of Freedom on Frank, who died in the spring of last year. An estimated 10,000 people attended Frank’s memorial service.

“I loved him like a beloved uncle,” said Heck. “We’ll give thanks for Billy Frank for the rest of our lives.”

Direct Link: <http://blog.seattlepi.com/seattlepolitics/2015/12/01/u-s-house-votes-to-rename-nisqually-refuge-after-native-american-leader-billy-frank-jr/>

Groups Ask Mexico to Pull Coca-Cola Ad on Indigenous

By The Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Dec 1, 2015, 5:06 PM ET

Consumer rights and health groups are calling on the Mexican government to pull a new [Coca-Cola](#) ad depicting young white people bringing Coca-Cola and Christmas joy to a beleaguered indigenous community in southern Oaxaca state.

The Alliance for Food Health says the add is "an attack" on the dignity of the indigenous and contributes to their deteriorating health. The ad, first posted last week, has been criticized for its depiction of light-skinned, fashion-model-like youth joyously constructing a Coca-Cola tree in town and hauling in coolers of Coke as a service project. [Mexico](#) has skyrocketing rates of obesity and diabetes.

Coca-Cola says in the ad that the campaign is to "break down prejudice and share."

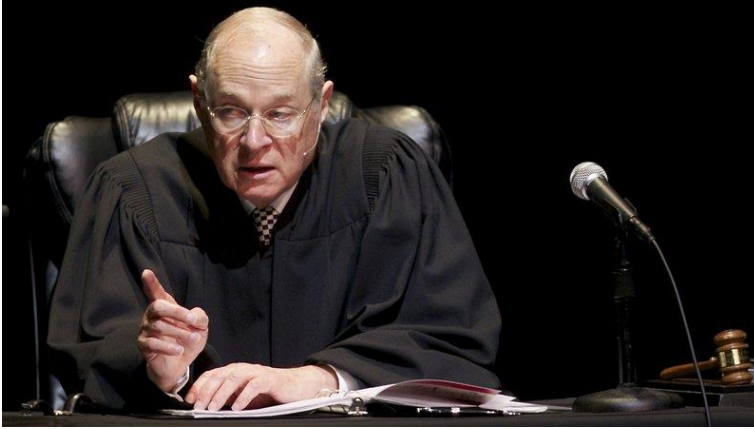
The groups will ask the National Council to Prevent Discrimination to pull the ad campaign immediately.

Direct Link: <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/groups-mexico-pull-coca-cola-ad-indigenous-35518959>

Supreme Court Temporarily Blocks Indigenous Hawaiian Vote

A vote which would allow indigenous Hawaiians to form a sovereign government has been extended by three weeks following the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to halt the vote count.

By [Derrick Broze](#) -
Nov 30, 2015



U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy. Photo: Damian Dovarganes/AP/NPR

Last Friday, Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy [temporarily blocked](#) ballot-counting for a vote that would allow Native Hawaiians to establish their own government within the Hawaiian state. Voting for the controversial measure began on November 1st and was scheduled to end on Monday the 30th. The Supreme Court is expected to issue more orders in the coming week.

The measure would allow Native Hawaiians to elect delegates for a convention next year in order to draft a declaration of self-governance. Currently, Native Hawaiians are the only indigenous community in the U.S. that do not have their own recognized government. The measure has been supported by the state of Hawaii as well as the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The proposal has been challenged by both Native Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians who say non-Native Hawaiian are being discriminated against and their constitutional rights violated. Only natives are allowed to vote. [The Scotus Blog reported:](#)

“Residents of the islands who do not meet that category argued in their plea to Justice Kennedy and the Court that the election, to be followed by a constitutional convention, was not a private matter left to those with the ancestral claim but was a government-sponsored and financed election that must conform to both the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. The outcome of the election, they asserted, will have a major public policy impact.”

The state of Hawaii and the non-profit corporation that runs the election told the Court that the election was a private matter and thus the rest of the Hawaiian population without indigenous blood could not participate. The challengers asked the Court to stop the vote count *“during the pendency of this appeal.”*

Justice Kennedy agreed to block the count and certifying of the vote “pending further order of the undersigned or of the Court.” The ballots cannot be opened and the decision cannot be officially certified until the Supreme Court has concluded ruling.

Last month U.S. District Judge J. Michael Seabright ruled in favor of the election, stating that those who are elected cannot change state or local laws. Still, some Native Hawaiians remain against the proposal. Kelii Akina, a Native Hawaiian and president of public policy think-tank Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, [told the AP](#) that “*racial inclusiveness is at the heart of the aloha spirit.*”

On Monday morning [Hawaii News Now reported](#) that the voting period has been extended for another three weeks.

“Because voters may not have cast their ballots over concerns and questions on the recent U.S. Supreme Court’s – SCOTUS — decision to temporarily stop the vote count, we are extending the voting deadline to December 21, midnight Hawaii time,” said Bill Meheula, legal counsel for [Na‘i Aupuni](#), the organization that has helped push for Hawaiian self-determination.

Direct Link: <http://truthinmedia.com/supreme-court-block-indigenous-hawaiian-vote/>

Wyoming Schools Get Poor Report Card For Native American Absenteeism

Updated December 2, 2015 7:33 AM ET

[Aaron Schrank](#)



In Wyoming, one in three Native students are what's considered "chronically absent." Educators on the Wind River Indian Reservation say that's a major factor holding back student achievement.

Craig Ferris begins his morning with an unscheduled stop in his black suburban.

"I usually have to come get these guys at least once a week," Ferris says, honking his horn.

Ferris is best known around here as the basketball coach who's led Wyoming Indian High School to four state championships. But he also works for the elementary school as what's called a "home-school coordinator."

The job seems to be equal parts mailman, social worker and taxi driver.

"It's kind of like a truant officer. My job is to make sure the kids who aren't coming to school — find out why, and what we need to do to get them to school," Ferris says.

Third-grader Talissa Cadotte missed the school bus this morning.

"My dad forgot to wake me up, so he called this guy," Cadotte says.



Craig Ferris in his office at Wyoming Indian Elementary School in Ethete, Wyo. Ferris spends most of his time driving around and knocking on doors on the vast Wind River Reservation.

Ferris's school district on the Wind River Reservation had the second-lowest attendance rate in Wyoming last year.

"It's one of the top things that really plague a kid's development in school, because if they're not in school, they're not learning," he says.

Ferris is off to deliver notices to parents whose children have missed too many school days. When kids have five, 10 or 15 unexcused absences, he shows up at their door with a letter.

Parents who can't get their kids to school can be charged with educational neglect and face probation and fines.

"A lot of parents know they're not sending their kids to school. They know why I'm visiting, so they're not going to answer the door," Ferris says.

Still, others are happy to see him — like Rickina Armour.

"He is the coach, the best coach we have," Armour says.

She says hearing him knock on the door is a good thing.

"Everybody knows I coach the high school team, so when I deliver letters, they're always asking me about the boys and the team and how we're gonna do this year. I think that kind of helps me out because most people know who I am," Ferris says.

Wyoming isn't alone facing this problem. Arizona, Montana and Oklahoma all see [similarly high absentee rates](#) for Native students.

"Nationally, what we see, for Native students at fourth grade, 29 percent are chronically absent. Eighth grade, 30 percent. That's pretty high," says Cecelia Leong, who works with [Attendance Works](#), a national initiative to reduce absences.

That's 10 percentage points higher than for white students, and those gaps start early.

An [Attendance Works report](#) found that Native kindergartners miss twice as many days as their white peers. Leong says those gaps in attendance become gaps in achievement.

"One of the consequences of early chronic absence is, ultimately, a high dropout rate for students," Leong says.

Juvenile Justice System Failing Native Americans, Studies Show

On the Wind River Reservation, where just half of all high school students graduate in four years, Coach Craig Ferris is knocking on doors to track down some kids who haven't been at school all week.

He learns they're visiting a family member in the hospital. Ferris says illness is a big reason many of his kids miss school. So is transportation. Another factor is mistrust, bred by generations of mistreatment of Native Americans in schools — both public and private.

"You really see where people — parents and families — are struggling. It might not look they're trying, but they're doing what they can. What's that saying? Doing what they can with what they have. It's a tough life out here," Ferris says.

Intervention efforts like these are needed now more than ever. Unlike other student groups, Native Americans have seen little improvement in reading and math scores over the past decade.

Direct Link: <http://www.npr.org/2015/12/01/457794519/wyoming-schools-get-poor-report-card-for-native-american-absenteeism>

Remarkable Native American Musicians

by Nancy Dunham

Buffy Sainte-Marie. Photography: Matt Barnes

Here's a rundown of the latest from four of our favorite artists.

In addition to Samantha Crain, one of the new artists profiled in the January 2016 issue, we sat down with the old guard to talk about their latest releases: Buffy Sainte-Marie, Arvel Bird, R. Carlos Nakai, and Joe Tohonnie Jr.

Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree)

Latest album: Power in the Blood

Standout track: "It's My Way"

Classic cuts: "He's a Keeper of the Fire," "Until It's Time for You to Go"

Born in Saskatchewan, Canada, and raised as an adopted daughter in Massachusetts, Cree singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie remembers being in preschool and writing stories and songs as the other kids played ball or dolls or board games.

"When I started singing, I had already been making up songs for years. It's just what I did for fun," she says. "I was able to make the music I did because I didn't have anyone scolding me into their own prejudices. I wrote about everything. ... But when I started out, I didn't think I was much of a singer. I did it because I wanted to share my songs."

Those songs famously included her views of the Vietnam War and the struggles of Native American and First Nations people, and they made Sainte-Marie a fixture on the folk music circuit. Her masterful writing and iconic voice — as well as prominent exposure on shows such as Pete Seeger's *Rainbow Quest*, *The Johnny Cash Show*, and *Soul Train* — are perhaps why her work from that era is so revered.

"Not only most songwriters and most musicians but also most audiences stick with what they liked in high school," she says. "A lot of people approach me and say, 'You were that protest singer' or 'You were a folk singer.'" She is those things and more, including an educator, artist, and scholar, having earned degrees in teaching and Oriental philosophy and a doctorate in fine art. Perhaps it's that breadth of education and experience that has enabled her to continually surprise fans musically as she moved from folk to country to rock and had songs covered by everyone from Donovan to Courtney Love.

Her latest album, *Power in the Blood*, sees Sainte-Marie trying on electronic rock with an urban edge. While it may surprise others, the songs seem natural to her. “These songs just popped into my head,” she says. “Most of my songs come from out of nowhere.”

She’s convinced her willingness to follow such a muse is the reason her career has lasted as long as it has. “I didn’t think it would last. I didn’t want to be Joan Baez or somebody. I just figured whatever the genre of song I’m lucky enough to intercept, I’ll do. They’ve always been pretty unique.”

Arvel Bird (Southern Paiute)

Latest album: *Animal Totems 3*

Standout track: “KOBRA”

Classic cuts: “Rockness Monster,” “Great Blue Heron”

Arvel Bird, the self-described Celtic Indian, was born in Utah, grew up in Arizona, and keeps a residence in Nashville. But he truly believes his home is the road. In a way, his lack of a geographic anchor is akin to the half-Native American, half-Scottish heritage that has inspired him to use Native flutes, Irish whistles, violins, and fiddles to create his signature world music.

Although he was classically trained in violin, Bird found himself in Nashville playing bluegrass, folk, and other genres, including country with Glen Campbell’s band. The mix-and-match of influences inspired him. “All of these genres were swirling around in my head, and I took up the violin to see what would come out,” he says. “The music touched something inside of me and made me weep. It expressed everything I felt about identity and connection.”

Bird uses his musical voice to move from fiddle tunes (*Red River Jig*) to spoken-word albums of Native stories (*Storyteller*) to a tribute to the passengers of the Titanic (*Titanic Centennial*). He’s now at work on a series of albums honoring endangered species.

“I started getting involved in some rescue sanctuaries in Florida, one of the biggest states to rescue tigers,” he says. “I’ve heard there are more tigers in Florida than in the wild. I got to spend some time with the rescuers of tigers, lions, snow lions, leopards, monkeys, and lemurs. I got to hear their stories of the rescues and how they felt about these animals that are endangered in the wild. Hearing about animals hunted to extinction and pushed out of their habitats, [I realized] it won’t be stopped unless we raise awareness. That’s very important to me.”

R. Carlos Nakai (Navajo/Ute)

Latest album: *Ritual* (with Peter Kater)

Standout track: “Meeting at Twilight”

Classic cuts: “Kokopelli Wind,” “Dreamscapes: Canyon People”

R. Carlos Nakai knew he was taking a chance in 1989 when he recorded *Canyon Trilogies*. He had a cedar flute and was determined to create a haunting sound, something that spoke to listeners’ entire beings rather than just their ears. As he recorded the 17 tracks of the album, most in just one take, the music became very personal and he found himself sinking into the songs, improvising more freely as the sessions progressed.

“It was nothing like anything I had done before,” Nakai says. “We were hesitant to release it. We didn’t know how it would be received. We didn’t know what the sales would be. But then we said, ‘Let’s see what happens with it.’”

What happened was the sound created a new benchmark for Native American flute music. It also created an album that was certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America in 2014 after selling 1 million copies. The certification is the first for a Native American artist playing Native music, according to the Native American Music Association.

Nakai began to play Native American flute in the 1980s almost by happenstance. Classically trained in trumpet and music theory, he had to give up the instrument when his embouchure — the use of facial muscles and the shaping of the lips to the mouthpiece — was damaged in a car accident. “When the accident occurred, it felt like the end of the world to me,” Nakai says. “I came home and found [a flute decoratively] hanging on the wall and took it apart to really see how it worked.”

He began going to powwows to hear the flute played and began talking to players. As he discovered familial ties to the flute and its Native history, he found it “more and more intriguing.” Soon it became his instrument of choice. Today, Nakai’s flute catalog includes work in an array of genres including jazz and classical.

“A lot of it is just my interest and wanting to again keep the sound of the instrument and the tradition of performing solo music with this instrument in the public eye,” he says. “I want to keep the music alive.”

[Joe Tohonnie Jr.](#) (Navajo/Apache)

Latest album: Ceremony

Standout track: “Rain Full of Joy”

Classic cuts: “Bird Song,” “Blessing of the Mountain Spirit”

Joe Tohonnie Jr. never intended to spend his life making spiritual music and leading a dance troupe. But when he was 6 years old, his grandfather told him that he had to learn

and practice the music, dances, and blessings of his people. “I said I didn’t want to do it and tried to make him see that. I wasn’t given a choice,” Tohonnie says. “Now I know it was my destiny.”

Tohonnie and his Apache Crown Dancers travel throughout the United States performing sacred dances and songs and providing blessings at the gatherings. It’s not a commercial venture, he says. “I am not a traditional singer. I do this for my people in the tradition of my grandfather.”

Tohonnie generally records and distributes his music for free. Two of his records — *Apache Blessings & Crown Dance Songs* and *Ceremony* — have won him highly coveted Grammy Award nominations for Best Regional Roots Music Album.

But it’s the music, more than the awards, that has won him a cross-cultural fan base. Tohonnie says he’s quick to point out to Native American kids with musical aspirations that they should not try to replicate his style but should instead hone their individual talents. Tohonnie believes that’s the way Native American music and traditions will continue to spread.

“My greatest goal is to have my culture and our traditions out there in the world,” he says. “I want to let the world see that you don’t have to be Native American to enjoy and be blessed by these things. We are all human beings — we’re all from the same blood, the same bodies, the same hearts. I am just so honored to have people inspired by my music.”

Although he seems elated by the nominations, Tohonnie’s real work isn’t in the studio but on the road, traveling with his dancers. “What we do is a blessing,” he says. “We do not do this to make money or gain fame. We do this to help people. All we ask is that those people remember us in their prayers.”

Direct Link: <http://www.cowboysindians.com/2015/12/remarkable-native-american-musicians/>

Marvel’s New Native American Superhero Comic Leans Too Hard on Old Tropes

[Evan Narcisse](#)



There's too much "old" in the Old West of Red Wolf #1.

The newest version of Red Wolf, the indigenous superhero that Marvel Comics introduced in the '70s, first appeared in *1872*, a miniseries tying into Marvel's ongoing Secret Wars crossover. In that title's alternate reality, time-shifted versions of Steve Rogers, Tony Stark and Bruce Banner came into conflict with a robber baron iteration of Wilson Fisk who ruled over the frontier town of Timely.

Spoilers follow.



In 1872, Red Wolf assumed the role of sheriff after the murder of Steve Rogers and the fun came from seeing established characters done up with period-appropriate re-imaginings, like the steampunk-ish Iron Man locomotive armor invented by a whiskey-drenched Stark. Red Wolf was quickly established the main character there and his ascendance pulled energy from the drama around all the other conflicts.



[23](#)

Red Wolf rose as other would-be heroes faltered in 1872. However, his new solo series—by writer Nathan Edmondson with art by Dalibor Talajic, Jose Marzan, Jr., Miroslav Mrva and Cory Petit—suffers from a lack of that melodramatic backdrop. He’s still the sheriff of Timely but one whose authority gets challenged immediately.



Part of what bothers me about *Red Wolf #1* is that the dramatic friction in this first chapter comes almost entirely pitting him against Timely's white settlers. While it's a familiar convention in Western stories, something about the execution here grated on me. It makes story-sense that some of the caucasians of Timely wouldn't trust Red Wolf but that's the blandest possible way to add spice to this story.

The last major series with a Native lead was Jason Aaron and R.M. Guera's *Scalped*, published by DC Comics' Vertigo imprint. The crime-drama plotlines in that book mined drama by simply having its Native characters clash against each other in ways that showed them struggling to uphold tradition in the modern day. *Red Wolf #1* makes light of white people dropping the names of indigenous tribal groups in wrongheaded fashion. It's a sly bit of humor but the book doesn't show Red's connection—or even lack thereof—with his own people. I went into this comic hoping for a sharper, more subversive take on these kinds of tropes and wound up with what felt like a lot of the same old thing.

Where *Red Wolf #1* succeeds is in evoking its lead character's sense of communion with its setting. A sequence where Red tells a young townspeople to keep watch makes it feel like he really is an expert tracker. And an exchange with Red's mother also carries the subtext of the harshness of frontier life, when she mentions that the day hasn't yet come that she won't be able to do her own hunting.

The main antagonist of the book shows up late in Red Wolf #1, triggering a drastic turn of events that will challenge Red Wolf's abilities to keep anyone in Timely safe. It's a callback to previous iterations of the character, who went on adventures with the Avengers and other A-list Marvel characters. It's too soon to say if this re-invention of the character will do the same but I do hope that Red Wolf does more than retread plot points from several decades' worth of cowboy movies.

Direct Link: <http://kotaku.com/marvel-s-new-native-american-superhero-comic-leans-too-1745545137>

Indigenous Peoples Discuss Climate Priorities at COP21

[Terri Hansen](#)

12/2/15

Before more than 150 world leaders converged on Paris this week to negotiate a long-term solution to man-made climate change at one of the most important climate summits in the talks' 21-year history, the world's indigenous leaders met on November 27 for the [International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change](#) (IIPFCC).

The IIPFCC, an official Caucus for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), produced proposals on November 29 for presentation to the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) that indigenous leaders, lawyers and experts—from the United States and elsewhere—would like to see incorporated into COP21 auxiliary documents, and beyond.

With a global population higher than 370 million, Indigenous Peoples inhabit every continent, speaking 5,000 languages. They represent myriad cultures, each with their own social and cultural institutions that are distinct from those of the dominant societies of the countries they live in. Speaking with one voice, in spite of their extreme diversity, Indigenous Peoples established the IIPFCC, which defends their fundamental rights with regard to an issue—climate change—that directly affects them, given the degree to which their activities and way of life are intimately tied to Earth and the environment.

As is well known, Indigenous Peoples often rely directly on natural resources and ecosystems, and thus are especially vulnerable to, and disproportionately hit by, climatic changes. They are being forcibly removed from their lands by deforestation, sea-level rise, major infrastructure projects and conflicts arising from resource scarcity. All the while, they play a critical role in climate change mitigation and adaptation through their historic and effective role as stewards of much of the world's remaining forests.

Indigenous Peoples and organizations came to the meetings with their own agendas, priorities and proposals to introduce during the IP caucus meetings that take place every morning during COP21.

“We Indigenous Peoples come to Paris after having engaged in an unprecedented process of consultation in our regions in the Arctic, North America, Asia, Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Russia and Eastern Europe and Africa, where we shared our perspectives, witnessed our suffering due to climate change, and reiterated our resolve to contribute with our traditional knowledge and livelihoods to adapt to and mitigate climate change to the benefit of all humankind,” the IPFCCC stated. “Our call comes from our lands, mountains, forests, rangelands and seas that suffer droughts, floods, melting of glaciers and thawing of permafrost and loss of sea ice. Climatic aggression threatens Indigenous Peoples’ individual and collective human rights and life ways including the right to life, the right to food, the right to health, and the right to lands, territories and resources.”

COP21’s goal is to achieve a new legally binding agreement on the climate, applicable to all countries. The summit’s official aim is to keep the Earth from heating by two degrees Celsius, or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit, above temperatures as measured at the beginning of the industrial revolution. If we reach a heating of two degrees Celsius over those earlier temperatures, low-lying island nations will drown beneath rising seas, rising seas will flood coastal cities and villages, droughts will worsen, and many species will be put at increased risk for extinction, and human health impacts will begin to appear, and worsen. And this is what tends to hit Indigenous Peoples the hardest.

Nearly every country has agreed that 2 degrees is too much. The IPFCCC wants to cap warming at 1.5 degrees. In October, in Bonn, the IIPFCC issued key demands to be addressed in the final climate change agreement, noting UNFCC findings that a global temperature increase of two degrees Celsius would fail to protect the food sources and local economies, and thus Indigenous Peoples’ resilience and survival. The IIPFCC advocates keeping the climate from warming higher than 1.5 degrees Celsius.

"The science is clear," said U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to [CNN](#). "Even a two-degree rise will have serious consequences for food and water security, economic stability and international peace. That is why we need a universal, meaningful agreement here in Paris."

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/12/02/indigenous-peoples-discuss-climate-priorities-cop21-162628>

Indigenous Designs; Native American fashions speak volumes in new Peabody Essex Museum exhibit

By Will Broaddus Staff Writer | Posted: Thursday, December 3, 2015 8:30 am



Indigenous Designs; Native American fashions speak volumes in new Peabody Essex Museum exhibit

Courtesy photo by Thosh Collins A cape and dress by Orlando Dugi, a Diné (Navajo), from his "Desert Heat" Collection, modeled by Louisa Belian, were created in 2012 from paint, silk, organza, feathers, beads and 24-karat gold. Hair and makeup are by Dina DeVore.

Museum artifacts and collections are typically hung on walls, or mounted on pedestals.

But in "Native Fashion Now," a new exhibit at Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Mass., the "Cascading Parasols" in the first gallery are floating in air.

They were designed by Patricia Michaels, and their canopies and handles look like petals and stalks, suggesting Michaels' Native name: Water Lily.

"There is one named 'Water Lily,' and seven shaped like water lilies in the show," said Michaels, a member of the Taos Pueblo tribe who lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. "I thought of organic things that do rise above murky water."

But her parasols also have a spiritual dimension, and carry messages.

"They're prayers for everyone to have success in whatever they're trying to achieve," Michaels said.

She instructed the models carrying her parasols, who can be seen in a video projected on the gallery wall, that they should think of themselves as female souls.

For Michaels, who appeared on season 11 of "Project Runway," these associations all came together in a creative process that connects her with her Native American family and traditions.

"There's new thoughts, just as my grandmothers and grandfathers had new thoughts as they thought about how America was changing around them," she said.

Michaels is one of 74 Native American fashion designers whose dresses, shoes and jewelry are featured in the Peabody Essex exhibit, the museum's first display highlighting pieces created solely by Native Americans.

In addition to her parasols, a "Cityscape Dress" that Michaels designed for "Project Runway" also appears in the show.

She said the design was inspired by a boat trip the contestants took around Manhattan, and also drew from paintings by Georgia O'Keefe and Agnes Martin, artists who spent time in both New Mexico and New York.

"I thought, I'll take Georgia's window from one of these paintings, and take Agnes Martin's minimalism and make a grid — make it a little bit abstract," Michaels said. "Then I just made it into a shift dress."

Each of the works in "Native Fashion Now" expresses a unique sense of style, while also referencing larger issues in contemporary and Native American culture.

Many of the pieces incorporate motifs, designs and color combinations that evoke tribal traditions. But they are also likely to be made from space-age materials, and to appeal to a wide range of tastes.

"One tradition never changes in Native American art: things change," said Karen Kramer, curator of Native American art and culture at PEM.

Kramer described the work in the show as "funky, relevant, and a little bit sexy," and said it "challenges stereotypes" by showing that "there are countless ways of being Native in this world."

There are dresses from the 1950s and 1960s by Lloyd "Kiva" New, a Cherokee who is considered the father of contemporary Native fashion design and whose work was sold in high-fashion stores across the country.

A brocade gown of bold red that was worn by First Lady Betty Ford is on display, too. It was designed in 1974 by Frankie Welch, a Cherokee who ran a boutique in Alexandria, Virginia.

Street style is represented by skateboards and sneakers with Native-inspired designs. There are also T-shirts with activist slogans, such as one proclaiming "Native Americans Discovered Columbus" by Jared Yazzie, a Dine (or Navajo.)

An elegant Eagle Gala dress by Dorothy Grant, a designer from the Haida people of the Pacific Northwest, sets traditional images of eagles in motion with flowing folds of silk, while a dress by American fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi looks like a totem pole, an important element of Haida culture.

Mizrahi's dress is included as an example of the borrowing and exchange that exists between mainstream and Native cultures, while leaving it to the viewer to decide whether he is paying homage to Native tradition, or exploiting it.

All but three of the featured designers in "Native Fashion Now" are still living. Grant and Michaels were among those on hand for the exhibit's press preview last month. They were joined by jewelers Pat Pruitt, a Laguna Pueblo, and Kristen Dorsey, who is Chickasaw.

"This allows us a platform for our voices," Michaels said. "This is a language you didn't hear."

IF YOU GO

What: "Native Fashion Now"

When: Through March 6

Where: Peabody Essex Museum, 161 Essex St., Salem, Mass.

How: Admission \$18 adults, \$15 seniors, \$10 students; free museum members, youths 17 and under and Salem, Mass., residents. Museum open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and third Thursday of every month until 9 p.m; closed Mondays (except holidays), Christmas and New Year's Day. Additional admission to Yin Yu Tang, \$5.

Information: 866-745-1876, pem.org

Direct Link: http://www.eagletribune.com/lifestyle/indigenous-designs-native-american-fashions-speak-volumes-in-new-peabody/article_9ed4484e-2747-581a-a839-609712e13915.html?mode=print

Here's What Native American Designers Want You to Know About Cultural Appropriation

By [Theresa Avila](#) December 02, 2015

You don't have to search hard to find what looks like "Native American" fashion. But the truth is the indigenous communities that are "inspiring" Native clothes are rarely included in their creation, from design to manufacturing.

The result is a lot of clothing without acknowledgment — and wearers without understanding — of the history or meaning behind the designs. That often leads to Internet-wide cries of "cultural appropriation," a much-debated term that's come to dominate any discussion of current Native American clothing.

Lost in these conversations, though, are the voices of Native American designers, whose work often flies under the radar while we debate "Native" clothing made by others. So *Mic* spoke to a handful of Native American designers to get their take.

What we learned: The line between cultural appropriation and appreciation is often determined by a gut feeling — and that the debate is but one piece of Native fashion today. Here's what they want you to know.

1. Native design is not all buckskin, fringe, feathers and beads.

In November, the largest traveling exhibition dedicated to Native American fashion, [Native Fashion Now](#), [opened](#) at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. It includes the work of over 70 designers, spanning the range of what "Native" fashion can be.

There are shirts and gowns that rework traditional motifs like bulls or beadwork. There are knee-high boots covered in beads. There are dresses that look like they're molded from space-age cellophane. Then there are T-shirts screen-printed with "Native Americans discovered Columbus," by 26-year-old Jared Yazzi, a Navajo designer.

"Today, Native American design can be anything," Pat Pruitt, a designer with Laguna Pueblo and Chiracahua Apache ancestry, told *Mic*. As a metalsmith, Pruitt works exclusively with stainless steel and titanium, creating distinctive jewelry that only occasionally references his indigenous background. Most people think of a "romanticized" concept of Native fashion, he said, an umbrella his work doesn't really fall under.

"It's Native design," he said. "I mean, I've designed it and I'm Native."

In a similar vein, the Native American designer Patricia Michaels embraces her indigenous ancestry even though her designs skew modern, without many stereotypical Native American references. She incorporates her culture into her work in ways that lend symbolic special meaning, she said.

"I'm a designer who happens to be Native American and I can't shake the fact that when I make something, it has meaning behind it," Michaels, who is Taos Pueblos, told *Mic*.

2. In fact, there are over 560 Native American tribes and nations.

That meaning can vary greatly by designer. What is often categorized as Native American style or fashion is based on stereotypes or styles typical of nations in the Southwest, which have historically gotten more media exposure.

But there are plenty of Native designers not of those tribes; the term "Native American" applies to more than [560 tribes and nations](#) in the United States. And like any other cultural groups, Native Americans' style and customs have evolved with every generation.

"Our communities are formed of people from tribal bloodlines," Elizabeth Perry, an Aquinnah Wampanoag designer and artist, told *Mic* via email. "We look different, have different languages and histories. Don't expect everyone to be the same, and don't expect all designers to be the same."

Yet Native American culture is often perceived as a "blanket ethnicity," Bethany Yellowtail, an Apsáalooke fashion designer, previously [told Mic](#). Lost in that blanket ethnicity are the rich histories of communities that haven't historically had the opportunity to benefit on a large scale from their artistry and work.

3. There are plenty of Native American designers out there, even if you can't tell their clothes are "Native."

Social media has become an important promotional platform for Native designers, as have museums and larger non-Native companies that are helping raise their profiles. In September, Martha Stewart included [three Native designers and boutiques](#) as contestants in an online competition spotlighting handmade American products.

Those designers, who are gaining bigger audiences every day, are the ones best positioned to design with Native American inspiration in mind.

"Artistic motifs tend to be distinct in each region, and it is the Native designer, and not the outside world, that has the cultural knowledge and sensitivity to know how and where specific designs can be employed without eroding those cultural beliefs and values," Perry said.

"It is the Native designer... that has the cultural knowledge and sensitivity."

4. What's sacred for one community may not be sacred for everyone.

As a result, what counts as "sacred" varies from tribe to tribe — which can lead to an awful lot of confusion.

"The complexity is there's so many different tribes," Pruitt said. "You know, you're dealing with 500-plus nations that each one is distinctly different and each one has very distinct cultural items that are precious to them."

The war bonnet, often recreated and sold as a feathered headdress, is a sacred item in many Native communities. While war bonnets are not a part Pruitt's community, he said he still has respect for the tradition.

"I do know what it signifies, where it comes from," he told *Mic*. "So I choose to support my Native brothers, because that is theirs."

5. If you're tired of talking about cultural appropriation, so are they.

The conversation about Native American style or symbols being appropriated by non-Native cultures [has heated up](#) in recent years. When the cultural copying or inspiration misinterprets the symbolism or glosses over its origin, as many Native American-inspired items [appear to do](#), it can sting, particularly for a community that's long been marginalized and had its sacred traditions misunderstood.

"I'd say appropriation, such as stealing designs, erasing the artist's name and tribal origin, are a continuation of the colonization process, as much as naming a car after a sacred ceremonial observance or trotting out a sports mascot are also part of the same intense degradation of Native American people that has gone on literally for hundreds of years," Perry said.

But that doesn't mean only Native Americans can be inspired by Native American culture. Designers repeatedly mentioned how they hope the conversation steers in another, more positive direction. They hope to focus on the current achievements of Native designers while empowering and encouraging people at all levels of the fashion industry to take it upon themselves to research the histories of their inspiration.

"[Cultural appropriation] is not broadly an unreasonable concept, I just think it's overcooked," Jamie Okuma, a Native American fashion designer from the Luiseño and Shoshone-Bannock tribes, told *Mic* via email. "So much so that it leaves a bad taste in the mouth and you don't want another bite. And that defeats any progress made."

Shoppers can do part of the work, though.

"There is opportunity that if you find something that, hey, you think might be Native, you can probably go search out artists that do stuff identical or very similar to that line of work and buy directly from them and have a very engaging experience," Pruitt said.

Designers repeatedly pointed to how easy it is to buy directly from Native American artists. It's one key difference between cultural appropriation and appreciation.

"Cultural appreciation means that you support the authentic, unkillable, poetic, daring, humorous, life honoring spirit that is embodied in the work of Native American designers," Perry said.

Direct Link: <http://mic.com/articles/129559/here-s-what-native-american-designers-want-you-to-know-about-cultural-appropriation#.BP1U2YZ7M>

Coca-Cola apologizes for 'insensitive' ad featuring indigenous Mexicans

Published December 03, 2015

FoxNews.com



Coca-Cola Mexico has backtracked over an ad featuring an indigenous Mexican community. (Reuters)

Coca-Cola has apologized for a "insensitive" Christmas video depicting a group of mostly young, white people traveling to a remote Mexican town to hand out bottles of Coke to indigenous locals.

The ad, part of Coke's "Open Your Heart" campaign, has been criticized for white hipster-like people building a Coca-Cola tree for the underprivileged villagers and delivering them coolers filled with soda.

The ad begins with a fact claiming that 81.6 percent of Mexico's indigenous people feel rejected for speaking a language other than Spanish, while showing faces of what appear to be villagers in the indigenous town of Totontepec. They do not source of the fact.

The scene transitions to a group of long-haired blond women and bespectacled young men joyously sawing wood, welding and painting before they playfully head off in an El Camino pickup to the eastern mountains of Oaxaca where Totontepec is located. The

copy continues, "This Christmas a group of young people decided to give something very special to the indigenous community of Totontepec (Villa) de Morelos in Oaxaca."

The visitors proceed to build a red tree with Coca-Cola lights to the smiles, hugs and appreciation of the locals, who belong to the Mixe community. Across the lighted tree are the words "We will stay united" in the Mixe language. The tourists then hand bottles of Coca Cola to the locals while everyone smiles. Coke tells viewers to #AbreTuCorazon – open your heart, in Spanish.

The spot first appeared across various platforms, including Coca Cola Mexico's YouTube channel and immediately drew ire from health advocacy and anti-discrimination groups across the country.

The Alliance for Food Health, a coalition of consumer rights and health groups, wants the Mexican government to block the ad, saying it is an attack on the dignity of indigenous people. It also says the ad contributes to the deteriorating health of Mexico's indigenous communities. Mexico is a major consumer of soda and other sugared drinks and has skyrocketing rates of obesity and diabetes. The average [Mexican consumes 43 gallons of soda per year](#), with Coca-Cola controlling a vast majority of the market share.

The alliance said it would formally ask the National Council to Prevent Discrimination to block the ad campaign immediately.

"It's outrageous for the indigenous," said Diana Turner, a public relations person for Consumer Power, one of the groups in the alliance.

Calls by The Associated Press to Coca-Cola Mexico all went to voicemail. In the commercial, the company says the campaign is meant to "break down prejudice and share."

The commercial and its #AbreTuCorazon hashtag have drawn a slew of critical comments across social media:

Initially, Coca-Cola appeared to defend the commercial over social media, responding: "We appreciated you sharing your concerns. We will be sure to pass along your comments."

But Wednesday night, a [spokesperson reached by Eater](#) apologized for the "insensitive" nature of the ad and said the [video has now been removed](#) from Coca-Cola Mexico's YouTube channel:

"As part of Coca-Cola México's Christmas campaign for this year the video "Mixe Community Totontepec" was launched on digital channels, seeking to convey a message of unity and joy. Our intention was never to be insensitive to or underestimate any indigenous group. We have now removed the video and apologize to anyone who may

have been offended. In nearly 90 years in the country, Coca-Cola Mexico has worked to share messages of unity and friendship to contribute to build a society free of prejudices."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Direct Link: <http://www.foxnews.com/leisure/2015/12/03/coca-cola-apologizes-for-insensitive-ad-featuring-indigenous-mexicans/>

Indigenous women are on the front lines of climate change. Where's the media coverage?

By [Aura Bogado](#) on 3 Dec 2015 5:09 pm [comments](#)

Coverage of the Paris climate talks largely concentrates on what diplomats will ([or won't](#)) agree to in this conference. There's also some focus [on the protests](#). But few stories center on the people whose lives are most affected by climate change. Sure, there are some stories here and there about small island nations literally going underwater and stuff, but those anecdotes are most often used as color for the background of a bigger story.

It's not like frontline communities aren't fighting climate change — but part of the obstacle that vulnerable communities face is that people don't always pay attention. Indigenous women across the Americas have been organizing to defend their lands and waters, yet we rarely read stories that showcase their struggle. That's why Feministing's Juliana Britto Schwartz launched a short series, [Bearing Witness](#), which envisions climate justice, amplified:

Indigenous communities and allies have long been fighting powers ten times their size in order to defend our planet. But for their movement to work, people outside of it have to bear witness. When attacking big superpowers like this, it's not enough for a few people to get arrested for blocking a coal ship for a few hours. Those two people need fifty more people standing on the loading dock in solidarity, one hundred more people Tweeting and Instagramming it, and thousands more signing online petitions, calling legislators, and exploding the reach of their message. The movement for climate justice needs megaphones so that the actions of a few people can reach millions of people. And when millions are watching and taking the lead from those most affected, global leaders will have to listen.

Now, nearly one week into the Paris climate talks, it's a relief to know that someone is telling these stories. Britto Schwartz kicks her series off highlighting the work of [Kichwa women fighting resource extraction](#) in the Ecuadorian rainforest:

Once they understood what was happening, the community called a state of emergency and began organizing. They gathered men, women, and children in what they called Peace Camps, through which they occupied the CGC's area of work. I spoke with Patricia Gualinga, Nina's aunt and a key protagonist in the Sarayaku movement. "No one stayed quiet in the fight to defend the Sarayaku," she told me. "Everyone participated — men, women, even elders who cared for the children while at the Peace Camps."

The Kichwa women, like Patricia, were leaders within the movement and have stood as examples for similar struggles against resource extraction. "Women's role in the defense of our territory has been fundamental — they came up with the idea that we should fight to protect our land from oil exploration altogether," Patricia says. "The women — supported by the men — did not offer to negotiate. They demanded that the Ecuadorian government respect their wishes and commit to never explore for oil on our territories."

But resource extraction isn't limited to South America. The Bakken oil formation sits 4,000 miles away in North Dakota, right where it butts up to Canada. It's also home to the Three Affiliated Tribes, which has seen its land usurped by settlers and now ravaged by fracking done by workers who live in so-called "man camps." As Britto Schwartz points out, [the result has been devastating](#):

This enormous influx of non-Native men — who are often inexperienced workers putting in dangerously long hours at risky jobs — has led to a horrifying increase in violence against Native women. Nationally, Native American women experience sexual violence at a rate that is 2.5 times that of any other women; 86 percent of the time, their assailants are non-native. But North Dakota now has the eighth highest incidence of rape in the country, and to read accounts from Fort Berthold residents, sexual violence is becoming increasingly normalized.

When writing about Bakken, Britto Schwartz also highlights the work that Dakota grandmothers like Faith Spotted Eagle are doing to counter "extractive projects and the violence that too often come with them."

Bearing Witness then looks at the work of the Garifuna women in Honduras, who are at risk of losing their communities due to more frequent and intense storms, along with rising sea levels. The resulting desperation motivates Garifuna men to migrate to the U.S. — leaving women behind, writes Britto Schwartz, to take up a tremendous amount of work:

"Women [everywhere are] defending life, culture, and territories, opposing a model of death that grows stronger each day. We are at the front of the avalanche of attacks," says Miranda. "We're at the front not only with our bodies but also with our force, our ideas, our proposals. We don't only birth children, but ideas and actions as well."

In matrifocal societies like the Garifuna, women are in charge of passing on and protecting ancestral lands, a responsibility which has become increasingly important as their lands are threatened by disasters, drug cartels, and land barons. Women have

become experts in organizing their people, cultivating family networks and community alliances to stand up to government powers and multinational companies.

The series wraps soon, and you can [read it in its entirety](#) on Feministing. Like Britto Schwartz, you can also think about the way we consume stories about climate change: by deliberately paying attention to whose stories are being told, and whose realities are being left completely out of the frame.

Direct Link: <http://grist.org/climate-energy/indigenous-women-are-on-the-front-lines-of-climate-change-wheres-the-media-coverage/>